

Arabs urge U.S. support for anti-Israel U.N. resolution

WASHINGTON (R) — Arab ambassadors urged the Bush administration Friday to support a U.N. resolution declaring Israeli settlements in the occupied territories illegal, but said they won no agreement.

"We are still in an ongoing discussion about this matter," Clovis Maksoud, the Arab League's U.S. representative, said after a meeting at the State Department.

U.S. officials might be willing to support a U.N. resolution criticizing the Israeli settlements but not one declaring them illegal, said a State Department official who asked not to be identified.

"If they came up with a resolution that we did not feel was damaging to the peace process, and was balanced, we could even work with them on it," the U.S. official said.

But Maksoud said he and the Arab ambassadors told Undersecretary of State Robert Kimmitt that the U.N. resolution could not effectively stop Israel's expansion of the settlements in Arab territory won in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war unless it declared the settlements illegal.

Maksoud said the issue will dominate an Arab summit meeting next week because of Arab concern that Soviet Jewish immigrants will expand the settlements to the point that Palestinians and Arabs will have no hope of winning the territory back in peace talks.

"We perceive this massive Soviet Jewish immigration to be a threat to our national security," Maksoud said.

"To us the settlements are outposts of creeping annexations and therefore they're illegal, a violation of international law, of the U.N. Charter, and are definitely obstacles to peace," Maksoud said.

He said the Arab ambassadors believed the United States should be able to support the U.N. resolution because of Washington's long public opposition to the settlements, but said Arabs are not willing to remove the provision that would declare the settlements illegal.

"The U.S. position is that they support Soviet Jewish immigration and they oppose (Israel's) settlement policy but we want this to be synchronized ... in positive support of our efforts in the United Nations," Maksoud said.

Meanwhile a U.S. human rights report has provoked a propaganda salvo against Israel — and an Israeli counter-attack in return.

The war of words has cost the financially-strapped United Nations about \$150,000.

Senegal, as chairman of the U.N. Committee on Palestinian Rights, fired the opening shot in March by asking the U.N. Secretariat to circulate a section of the latest annual United States report detailing human rights abuses around the world.

The Senegalese ambassador, Absa Claude Diallo, focused on a part of the report dealing with violations in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip where a Palestinian uprising has flared for the past 29 months.

It is normal practice for U.N. members to request circulation of letters, statements and even lengthy documents to draw attention to certain issues or as a means of scoring propaganda points.

Each page, however, costs the United Nations more than \$500 to translate, type, reproduce and distribute in the organization's six official languages — Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

At the request of the Palestine Rights Committee, the United Nations had circulated the section of last year's U.S. "country reports on human rights" dealing with the Israeli-occupied territories.

Anticipating a repeat this year, Israeli Ambassador Johanan Bein told the U.N. Secretariat privately that, in that case, he would use

the right to spotlight human rights abuses.

"It is also clear that those who most make use of documents criticizing Israel themselves have most worse human rights records," an Israeli diplomat said.

The committee on the exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people went ahead with its request, anyway, and in late March a 16-page U.N. document reproduced Washington's observations on Israeli violations.

Within two weeks, at Bein's request, the section of the U.S. report dealing with Senegal made the rounds as a 12-page U.N. document. To drive home the point, the most unflattering passages were underlined.

But Israel, usually sparing in asking to circulate documents, did not halt its counter-attack there.

In subsequent weeks, an avalanche of further excerpts from the U.S. report was published at its request, targeting members of the Palestine Rights Committee as well as other countries Israel considers hostile.

Spotlighted, in addition to Senegal, have been Iraq, Cuba, Syria, Malaysia, Laos, Pakistan, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Afghanistan and Bahrain, with more expected to follow.

Cairo court overturns election law as unconstitutional

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's highest court Saturday declared unconstitutional the law under which the current parliament was elected.

But the constitutional court said the election code's flaws do not invalidate legislation enacted by the 458-member People's Assembly since it was seated in 1987.

President Hosni Mubarak's government argued before the court that the law does not violate individual rights, but the ruling that it did was widely expected.

So was the ruling that parliament's actions are valid, because court findings in non-criminal suits cannot be retroactive.

The verdict leaves the country's immediate political future in Mubarak's hands. He must decide whether to disband the assembly or simply to order it to amend the election code to satisfy the constitutional court's objections.

Sources close to the government said Mubarak is more likely to keep the assembly alive until its term expires in 1992. The assembly would legislate a new or amended election law before the next polls.

The sources said the government feels the national mood is not right for elections now. Religion-based trouble between Muslims

and Christians has occurred recently in parts of the country. The government has been cracking down on Islamic militants. Officials also are wary about public grumbling over recently increased prices for fuel and other consumer goods.

In Saturday's ruling, Court President Mamdouh Mustafa Hassan said: "Since the People's Assembly elections were held... unconstitutional by the court in the present case, this ruling necessarily means that the composition of the assembly has been null since it was elected."

But Hassan made a point of stating that all laws passed by the

assembly "are valid."

The seven-member court acted on a complaint by Kamal Khalid, 59, a lawyer who disputed the constitutionality of two articles in the 18-year-old, often-amended election law.

The articles involved quotas for independent candidates and the number of voters in voting districts. The court upheld Khalid's objection that both violate constitutional guarantees of equal opportunity.

Commando raids in S. Lebanon low as militia grip tightens

By Peter Smerdon
Reuters

KFAR HOUNEH, Lebanon — The schoolmaster fleeing the violence of Beirut failed to understand the hand signals from the distant Lebanese guards and followed the first car towards the hill-top checkpoint.

"Halt," bellowed the guard. He then swiftly raised his U.S.-made M16 rifle and fired two rounds over the roof of the second car to ensure it waited its turn at the fortified gateway to the south.

Welcome to Israel's "security zone" in South Lebanon.

Rule one: Civilian vehicles are only permitted to approach checkpoints one at a time — to avoid hit-and-run attacks.

Rule two: All vehicles must carry at least two people when moving — to deter lone suicide bombers.

Rule three: On seeing an

Israeli army patrol approaching, a driver must pull to the side and wait until it passes — to stop car bombs being rammed into convoys.

"I'm not sure about rule three," said an officer in the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia, charged with protecting the zone and Israel's northern border against guerrilla attacks.

"If I wanted to blow myself up in a car filled with explosives as an IDF (Israeli army) patrol passed, I would feel happier stationary than fumbling with the trigger and timing and trying to drive."

"Still it seems to work," he said.

And increasingly so does the Israeli-declared "security zone" — a swathe of territory between two to 14 kilometres wide north of Israel's border stretching 85 kilometres from the Mediterranean in the west to Mount Hermon in the east.

SLA, Israeli and United Nations commandos said the first four months of this year were some of the quietest in the zone since Israel withdrew most of its troops from Lebanon in 1985 after its 1982 invasion.

In addition to the low level of guerrilla attacks and other incidents, they agreed that the SLA had become a more professional

force at an estimated cost to Israel of \$3 million a month.

The militia is supported by several hundred Israeli troops in the South which are reinforced when needed. The 5,000 U.N. peacekeepers in the region hold that the SLA is illegal and refuse officially to recognize it.

"If you compare the first four months of last year with the same period this year the number of (guerrilla) operations are 25 per cent of what they were," said SLA Commander General Antone Lahd, largely recovered from an attempted assassination 18 months ago.

"Also most operations now consist of shooting in the direction of our positions from far away. In the past they tried to occupy them," said Lahd, who added that the SLA was at full strength with 3,000 militiamen.

The general saw the reduction in attacks as proof of the improved strength of the SLA through better training and equipment which led to high guerrilla losses, deterring groups from launching attacks.

But U.N. officers said that although the SLA had become more effective, this did not fully explain the large decline in guerrilla operations.

"The last four months were very quiet but maybe it depends

more on the situation in Beirut," said Colonel Odd Helge Olsen, commander of the Norwegian battalion of the United Nations Interim Forces in South Lebanon (UNIFIL).

The U.N. officers said a power struggle in the Shi'ite Muslim community between the Syrian-backed Amal militia and pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) had largely switched the groups' attention away from raids on the buffer zone.

"Since the Amal-Hizbollah war began in 1988, the trend has been for operations in the south to be 50 per cent down," said a U.N. source. "We used to count two attacks a day but in the last few months we had one or less a day and low casualties."

The SLA suffered no fatalities in the first three months of this year.

"The SLA and IDF still have some problems but now for instance the SLA can directly call in Israeli helicopters or artillery support," the source said. "No other militia in Lebanon can match their resources."

The source said incidents of SLA militiamen firing at UNIFIL positions had fallen. "The IDF is even testing them, seeing if it can stay on the border and let the SLA hold the zone," he said.

Many ordinary soldiers in the

U.S. church group criticises Israel

PITTSBURGH (AP) — The largest ecumenical group in the United States has come out against an Israeli move into Arab Jerusalem.

The National Council of Churches wrapped up its policy-making meeting Friday with a resolution that also expressed regret at the U.S. congressional recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

The council said Jerusalem is threatened by actions favouring one religion, such as the non-binding congressional measure.

The city is "a focus of deepest religious inspiration and attachment of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the council said.

The council asked Israeli leaders to remove Jewish settlers from St. John's Hospice, a Greek Orthodox shelter.

About 150 armed Jewish settlers, backed by \$1.8 million from the Israeli government, moved in during the week before Easter.

Last week an Israeli court ordered all but 20 settlers to leave until the court resolves the issue.

The Hospice is across the street from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, believed by Roman Catholic and many Orthodox religions to be the burial site of Jesus Christ.

The church council, which represents most major Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant religions, but not Roman Catholics, comprises 32 denominations with 42 million members.

"The council... deplores and condemns this state-sponsored provocation and attack upon these historical understandings... that have served to preserve the peace of Jerusalem," a resolution passed Friday said.

The resolution also criticised "the brutal and aggressive reactions of the Israeli police against the Christian and Muslim leaders and laity."

U.S. aide, Sudan rebel chief discuss peace bid

NAIROBI (R) — A senior U.S. State Department official has met Sudanese rebel leader John Garang to try to revive his peace talks with Khartoum.

Garang and Herman Cohen, assistant secretary of state for African affairs, held talks in the Kenyan capital Nairobi Friday. They said in a joint statement that they explored "ways of moving towards peace and democracy in Sudan."

A U.S. embassy spokesman said.

Army (SPLA) and Sudanese government officials, mediated by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, collapsed in December largely over the question of Islamic Law.

The SPLA has been fighting since 1983 for a secular government and against what it sees as domination of Christian or animist south Sudan by the Muslim and Arabised north.

U.S. diplomats in Khartoum have recently met Sudanese officials to try to bring the two sides together, the American spokesman said.

U.S.-Ethiopia talks on improved ties cancelled

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S.-Ethiopian talks on improving relations and opening a northern food relief route has suffered a setback when a high-level meeting was abruptly cancelled.

U.S. officials said the meeting was cancelled because it was not clear whether an Ethiopian en-

voy, Kassa Kebede, had authority to commit his government to agreements.

"It was rather indefinite... whether he could commit his government on things that were very important to us," said a U.S. official, speaking on condition she not be identified.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS BRIEFS

Iran paper urges punishment for critics

TEHRAN (R) — An Iranian newspaper Saturday urged severe punishment for opposition figures who complained of tyranny and demanded political freedom in a letter to President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani. The hardline Jomhuri Eslami newspaper, which has been in place since the 1979 Islamic revolution, the paper alleged that several members of the Freedom Movement Party, headed by former Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, had recently met two members of the U.S. Congress to discuss ways of overthrowing the government. It gave no names. Bazargan and 90 other liberal and nationalist figures sent a letter to Rafsanjani this week criticising the economic situation and demanding freedom for political parties. Bazargan was Iran's first post-revolutionary prime minister but soon fell out of favour with Islamic hardliners for his liberal tendencies. "There is no doubt that these elements are fingerprints of America and failure to take tough action against them will embolden them in their attacks."

UAE president arrives in Indonesia

JAKARTA (AP) — UAE President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan arrived on Indonesia's tourist island of Bali Saturday at the start of a six-day visit aimed at building closer ties between the two nations. After two days of rest, Sheikh Zayed is to fly to Jakarta Monday for four days of talks with President Suharto and Indonesian cabinet members. Zayed's 17-day trip to three Asian countries, which also included China and Japan, is his first visit to the region since he became president of the United Arab Emirates in 1971. Although Indonesia does not call itself an Islamic country, more than 90 per cent of its population of 175 million people are Muslim. A senior UAE official told the Associated Press that relations between the two countries were good and "there are no problem between us." Indonesia's exports to the UAE from \$16.2 million in 1980 to \$122.8 million in 1989, while its imports increased from about \$6,000 to \$2.4 million. Like the UAE, Indonesia is a major oil producer, with daily production of about 1.3 million barrels, compared to 3 million barrels in the UAE.

Qadhafi's rule will soon end — prince

WASHINGTON (AP) — A pretender to the Libyan throne has said strongman Muammar Qadhafi will soon be overthrown. Prince Idris Al Sanusi has been meeting with U.S. officials and businessmen to introduce himself as Libya's next leader. Prince Idris, whose great uncle, King Idris I, was overthrown by Qadhafi in 1969, has been touring other world capitals with a similar message. Idris, whose father tried unsuccessfully to topple Qadhafi twice, said in an interview that he has an underground organisation of loyalists within Libya who support his return. Information gleaned from the group indicates that top military officials close to Qadhafi are ready to depose him, said Idris.

Bhutto 'encouraged'

(Continued from page 1)

peaceful, political settlement" to the Afghan conflict but rejected any recognition of the present government of President Najibullah in Kabul, which, she said, has been unable to "provide security and stability so that the (estimated two million Afghan) refugees who are on the soil of Pakistan to return to their country."

She reaffirmed her country's support for the government in exile set up by the Mujahideen rebels fighting the Kabul government and said an election plan proposed by the "democratic Afghan government and discussed by the various groups is an important step towards seeking a political settlement" in Afghanistan.

Bhutto said Pakistan was not interested in installing "any particular group or individual in power" in Kabul. "The objective of Pakistan is to see an independent, non-aligned Afghanistan" with a strong government, she said.

In a prepared statement, Bhutto said that the Pakistani leader's talks in Amman centred on the changing international arena and the Middle East conflict, including the intifada and the no-peace-no-war situation between Iran and Iraq as well as the problem of Kashmir. Both Jordan

and Pakistan reiterated their call for an international peace conference on the Middle East conflict, and the implementation of U.N. Resolution 598 to restore peace between Iran and Iraq, Bhutto said.

Bhutto also said that Pakistan and Jordan welcomed Iran's President Saddam Hussein's invitation for direct talks with the Iranian leadership and "Tehran's positive response to the Iraqi invitation."

A Pakistani official was meanwhile quoted as saying that Bhutto's visit to Syria had resulted in Damascus pledging to make "concrete proposals" on Kashmir at the meeting of Islamic foreign ministers.

"I have no hesitation to say that our point of view is now much better understood (by Syria) than it was two days ago," Foreign Secretary Taswir Ahmad Khan was quoted as saying by Reuters Friday. There was also official Syrian confirmation of Damascus' position.

Bhutto, who has already visited Tehran and Ankara, and secured Iranian and Turkish support for her country in the conflict with India, will travel to Egypt from North Yemen and also visit Libya and Tunisia during her current swing through the region.

Israel 'will not attack first'

(Continued from page 1)

Political observers said they believed the reported assurances had been leaked by the Egyptian authorities as part of Cairo's campaign to reduce tension between Iraq and Israel.

The tension was based on precedent. In July 1981, Israeli warplanes bombed and destroyed an Iraqi nuclear reactor on the outskirts of Baghdad.

"The Middle East News agency has learned that in a recent contact between Israel and Egypt, Israel gave Egypt a promise that it will not be the first to attack any Arab state," the agency report said.

It said Israel also told Cairo that it was "anxious for the continuation of the peace process with Egypt and for the achievement of peace with other Arab countries."

Shamir spokesman Pazner said, "It is our longstanding policy for the last 42 years, since Israel's founding, never to attack an Arab state."

"Israel has peaceful intentions towards its neighbours and would like to be able to reach out and change the relationship between us and our neighbours," Pazner added.



nine-nation UNIFIL, however, still regard the SLA as troublemakers. Their dislike is shared by many in the SLA, which regards UNIFIL as a bunch of foreigners in a conflict they can't understand.

The U.N. source said the militia had proved its strength with the help of a 500-man mobile strike force.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:30	Koran
15:40	Programme review
15:45	Children programme
17:10	Football
18:00	News summary in Arabic
18:45	Local programme
18:50	Cultural programme
19:00	Local programme
19:40	Programme review
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Arabic series
21:30	Programme review
21:40	Local programme
22:00	Arabic series
23:00	News summary in Arabic
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:20	Tel Aviv Tel Film
18:15	L'ecole de faus
19:00	News in French
19:15	French varieties
19:30	News in Hebrew
19:45	Arabic series
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Who's the Boss?
21:10	World of Puppetry
22:00	News in English
22:20	Agatha Christie's Poirot
PRAYER TIMES	
04:07	Fajr
05:31	(Sunrise) Dhuhr

CHURCHES	
12:30	Dhuhr
16:13	'Aw
19:30	Maghrib
21:43	'Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifiah, Tel. 810740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 637885	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terraviva Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 772561	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 635326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817 and 654922	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	

It will relatively hot and winds will be northwesterly light to moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.	
AMMAN: Min./max. temp.	
Amman	15 / 29
Aqaba	20 / 37
Dead Sea	14 / 32
Jordan Valley	18 / 35
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 31, Aqaba 39. Humidity readings: Amman 20 per cent, Aqaba 15 per cent.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Mohammad Azzam	819925
Dr. Nabil Al-Hadad	826252
Dr. Jamal Tahir	794710
Dr. Khalil Al-Khatib	785392
First pharmacy	622502
Fordoun pharmacy	778336
Al Aqsa pharmacy	677852
Natroukh pharmacy	622672
Al Salem pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shmiciani pharmacy	637660
EMERGENCIES	
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630431
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	775121
Hotel Complaints	605900
Traffic Police	843402
Public Security Department	806301
Police Complaints	661176
Police Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	09991071
Reprints	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111

Other Flights (Terminal 2)			
05:20	Dubai (AZ)	20:25	Sanaa (LH)
11:05	Cairo (MS)	22:30	Athens (OA)
11:20	Kuwait (KU)	02:00	Sanaa (RJ)
12:30	Tripoli (LM)		
19:25	Frankfurt (LH)		
20:35	Beirut (ME)		
22:45	Athens (OA)		
MARKET PRICES			
Up/Down/Price in \$/lb per kg.			
Apple			
Banana			
Banana (Muskanna)			
Beans			
Broad beans			
Cabbage			
Carrot			
Cauliflower			
Cauliflower (large)			
Cauliflower (small)			
Dates			
Eggplant			
Garlic			
Lemon			
Mallow			
Melon (large)			
Melon (small)			
Onion (dry)			
Onion (green)			
Orange			
Orange (Shamouti)			
Pepper (hot)			
Pepper (sweet)			
Potato			
Radish			
Sage			
Spinach			
Tomato			
Watermelon			



Three pick-up trucks, 340 kilograms of hashish and arms and ammunition seized by the Anti-Narcotics Bureau in an operation Friday display.

Major drug bust in Jordan

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Air-borne forces and speedboats seized 690 kilograms of hashish with a street value of JD 700,000 and arrested an undisclosed number of Jordanians as well as other Arab nationals in two separate operations Friday.

According to anti-narcotics bureau chief Brigadier-General Ghaleb Al Zoubi, the first operation was carried out in the waters of the Gulf of Aqaba where anti-drug forces laid a trap early Friday following a tip-off that an Egyptian boat was expected to pick up a large consignment of hashish.

"The boat did not turn up at the rendezvous, and anti-narcotics forces moved in and seized the drug haul and arrested several people," Zoubi told reporters Saturday.

The quantity seized in the Aqaba operation was 350 kilograms of hashish, he said. He declined to give the number of people arrested, obviously since more suspects were at large.

"The second operation, which took place in the northeast of the country near the border with Syria, involved a full mobilization of all security forces, including the police and border patrols, after information was received that a major drug shipment was on its way to Jordan en route to another country," Zoubi said.

Four pick-up trucks carrying a total of 340 kilograms of hashish of Lebanese origin were seized, and at least 10 people were arrested in a three-hour operation, including a one-hour helicopter chase across the desert and shootout with the smugglers, according to Zoubi.

"We believe that many others involved in the case are at large," he said without giving details. "Investigations are continuing."

The head of the anti-narcotics department in the north, Major Mohammad Al Fahal Al Othman, who was directing the operation from the helicopter was shot and wounded by the smugglers. "The wound was not serious and the 36-year-old officer was back on duty," he said.



Ghaleb Al Zoubi

his feet," Zoubi said. "Another officer was slightly injured by flying glass, but none of the suspected smugglers were injured in the clashes," he added.

Detailing the operation, Zoubi said security forces initially intercepted three pick-up trucks carrying 120 kilograms of hashish at different points in the northeast, but the fourth defied police orders and sped off into the desert. A wide dragnet was drawn in the area, and a police helicopter was called in. "The chase was on in full force after the helicopter spotted a vehicle racing across the desert at a crazy speed," he said. "The description of the vehicle matched that of the fugitive pick-up truck, and the helicopter approached the vehicle and ordered it to stop."

There was no compliance with the order, and instead the smugglers opened fire on one of our cars closing in on them. "The helicopter followed the smugglers' vehicle across the desert while all possible exit points were sealed off," he said. "The shootings and the chase continued onto the main highway, and the smugglers were forced to a stop by a makeshift roadblock by a police car. The helicopter also landed on the main road and the smugglers were immediately arrested and the vehicle, which carried a Saudi licence plate and driven by a Saudi national, was found to contain 220 kilograms of hashish."

Displayed in front of the anti-narcotics bureau at Abdali were the four seized pick-up

trucks. One of them bore heavy bullet marks and its windshields were shattered. The seized drugs, packed in cellophane and jute wrappings of about one kilogram each, worth about JD 500 in "wholesale" and JD 1,000 "on the street," were also displayed.

Also on display were at least one Kalashnikov machinegun, five old-fashioned bolt-action rifles, ammunition belts and a heap of loose shining copper-plated bullets as well as several revolvers and an assortment of knives and blunt instruments used in close fighting. Officials said the arms and ammunition were seized from the smugglers. Two of the vehicles carried Saudi licence plates.

It was the third reported seizure of drugs in Jordan in 1990 where the smugglers used firearms against anti-narcotics forces. In one incident, an officer was shot and killed, according to the Public Security Department (PSD). Informed sources said almost four tonnes of hashish alone were seized since the beginning of the year in a series of operations.

Jordan is seen as a major transit point for drugs from Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey, passing through Syria, headed for Saudi Arabia and Egypt, according to U.N. experts. The local authorities say that while Jordan does not have a major drug abuse problem, drug enforcement authorities have a major task trying to block the Kingdom's territory being used as a smuggling route, mostly for hashish originating in Lebanon.

Zoubi said that the consignment seized Friday in the northeast was "destined for a neighbouring Arab country." He did not give the name of the country, but it was believed that it was Saudi Arabia.

According to earlier reports, more than 150 people of Jordanian as well as other nationalities, have been arrested in a span of eight months in what the police authorities describe as a stepped-up anti-narcotics campaign in Jordan. Many of the arrested have already been tried and convicted while others are awaiting trial.

Princess Basma to attend Cairo talks on women

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma left for Cairo Saturday to take part in a conference on economics and social challenges posed to the Arab World in the 1990s and Arab women's contributions to promoting development.

The Princess will deliver an address at the opening session dealing with ways to increase the role of Arab women in development in the new decade.

Several working papers will be reviewed during the conference which will be formally opened by Egyptian First Lady Suzanne Mubarak. Specialists in women affairs

from 15 Arab states, including Jordan, will participate in the conference along with representatives of various Arab and international organisations.

The Princess will be attending the conference in her capacity as chairperson of the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund's board of trustees.

Also taking part in the conference is Inaam Al Mufti, director general of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), who will submit a working paper dealing with ways to increase family income through women's efforts and shed light on the NHF's activities and programmes in this regard.

Amman to host seminar on Arab economic integration

AMMAN (Petra) — Economists from Arab countries regional and international organisations are to convene in Amman Sunday for a three-day seminar on development in the Arab World and scopes of Arab economic integration.

The seminar, which will be held under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, will review five working papers dealing with a range of topics related to economic development, according to sources

at the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU) which is sponsoring the seminar.

According to the sources, the papers deal with the following: Arab World development problems and the causes behind the economic crises, joint Arab economic action, reforming economic policies in the Arab World, documents of the Amman Arab summit which dealt mostly with economic issues and indicators of the future Arab economy.

Syria to aid Jordan in goat breeding

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Syria-based Arab centre for the study of arid zones and dry lands will provide technical assistance to Jordan in fattening goats to help meet the country's growing requirements of lean meat, according to an agreement signed in Amman Saturday.

The Arab centre will supply technical assistance and staff to monitor the progress of the project which is to be set up at Wala agricultural station in southern Jordan, according to the agreement signed by Minister of Agriculture Suleiman Arabiyat and the centre's Director General Mohammad Al Khashen.

In the initial state, the Wala station will breed 200 heads of goat and the technicians will monitor their growth and collect data and information for follow up studies.

The agreement also provides for the project to last for five years during which the technicians will help in increasing dairy products and improving the breeds of goats.



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday receives a message from the head of the Revolutionary Command Council in Sudan Omar Hassan Ali Beshir concerning Jordanian-Sudanese relations and the projected Sudanese-Libyan unity. The message was delivered to the King at the Royal Court by Sudanese envoy Faisal Abu Saleh who is also a council member (Petra photo).

Zarqa elects new mayor

ZARQA (J.T.) — The city of Zarqa Saturday appointed a new mayor, the first in 12 years, after municipal elections held here last week.

The new mayor is Yasser Al Omani who secured the highest number of votes (9735 out of a total of 21,953) and his election as mayor came in a unanimous move at a meeting by the 10-member council with governor Mohammad Shobaki.

Shobaki and the council members reviewed several issues in Zarqa and the pressing services needed by the public. He said he would pursue formal procedures to have Omani officially recognised by the government as mayor of the city of 450,000 residents.

Omani was quoted earlier as criticising the poor quality services for the public in Zarqa which he blamed on lack of coordination between government-appointed committees to take charge of Zarqa municipal affairs in the past 12 years.

CEHA opens workshop

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman-based regional Center For Environmental Health Activities (CEHA) set up by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Saturday opened a workshop attended by delegates from eight countries in the eastern Mediterranean region.

According to CEHA officials the 11-day workshop, called the "second regional workshop on CEHANET procedures" is aimed to follow up training of technical personnel working in the CEHANET National Focal Agencies and Collaborating Centres who participated in the first regional workshop last year.

The participants will try to create a common background in documentation and information handling, will discuss problems and limitations encountered when applying CEHANET procedures and to introduce modern information technology to CEHANET system, the official

Health Minister Mohammad Addab Al Zaben, who opened the first session, stressed that information related to environmental health had become essential in development processes. Zaben expressed hope that the workshop would contribute towards enriching the participants' knowledge and skills.

Addressing the delegates, who represent seven Arab and foreign countries, was Dr. Hassan Baroudi, CEHA director, who conveyed a message by Dr. Hussein Gezairy regional director of (WHO) eastern Mediterranean region.

He said that (WHO) was committed to developing the network and making it sustainable as long as it serves environmental health promotion in the region.

Countries taking part in the workshop are Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Tunisia, and Sudan.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Abu Taleb receives Pakistani official

AMMAN (Petra) — Army Chief of Staff Fathi Abu Taleb had a meeting in his office Saturday with Sarver Gholam Shima, Pakistan minister of state for defence. They reviewed military cooperation between Pakistan and Jordan and the general military situation in the Middle East.

Mayor of Peking visits Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Visiting Deputy Mayor of Peking Kuwang Chao Saturday toured several areas in Amman including the King Abdullah complex and public gardens. Later, accompanied by officials from the Amman Municipal Council, the Chinese official visited the Amman National Park. The mayor was scheduled to meet with senior municipal council members during his five day stay in Amman. He leaves for home Monday.

ACC weathermen to meet

AMMAN (Petra) — Directors of meteorology departments in the four-member Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries will meet in Amman Sunday to plan out cooperation among their countries. Director of the Meteorology Department in Amman Ali Abanda said that the three-day meeting was expected to deal with ways of implementing an agreement on meteorology affairs.

Yarmouk participates in Cairo seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — Yarmouk University will take part in a four-day conference on socio-economic challenges facing national development due to be held in Cairo from May 20-24. The university will be represented by Atef Odeibat, who will present a working paper on international emigration and its impact on the social, economic and political status of Arab women. The conference is organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in cooperation with the Arab League and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

Yarmouk to hold Indian photo exhibition

AMMAN (J.T.) — President of Yarmouk University Ali Mahafzah will open at the Yarmouk University a photographic exhibition on Indian industry and trade. Photographs of places of historical and cultural interest would also be displayed. The exhibition would remain open for four days. It is part of the process in growing cooperation between the two countries in the fields of industrial, economic, trade and science and technology.

Charity bazaar opens in Al Qaser

KARAK (Petra) — A charity bazaar for several Islamic schools was opened at Al Qaser town near the southern city of Karak. On display for seven days are Islamic books, children books, children toys, paintings and artificial flowers.

Oldest person in Jordan dies

AMMAN (J.T.) — A woman, believed to have been the oldest in age in Jordan and perhaps in neighbouring Arab states died at Baqaa refugee camp in the Balqa governorate at the age of 130, according to a report in Sawt Al Shaab Arabic daily. The report said that Hanifah Hussein Al Awadim is survived by several children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and that the youngest of her children was over 80 years of age. The woman was reported to have passed away last Wednesday.

Road accidents claim three lives

AMMAN (J.T.) — Three citizens were killed and 240 others were injured as a result of road accidents in the Kingdom between May 5 and 12, according to police sources. They said most of the accidents occurred in Amman, followed by Zarqa and Balqa governorates and the majority of accidents resulted from speeding among other traffic regulations.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Exhibition of paintings and sculptures by five Jordanian artists at Abdali Hassan Foundation (10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
- Art exhibition by students of Nazareth Sisters School at the French Cultural Centre.
- Art exhibition by Hani Al Khayyat at the Alia Art Gallery.
- Exhibition of paintings by Randa Barakat at Goethe Institute.
- Art exhibition by Mahmoud Taha at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

- Feature film entitled "Death of a Soldier" at the Amman Cinema — 7:00 p.m.

SHOW

- Spanish Flamenco show at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

Irbid industrial city almost completed

IRBID (J.T.) — Work at the Al Hassan industrial city in Irbid, a JD 7 million project, is near completion and most of the basic services have been provided and buildings erected, according to Dr. Faysal Subeimat director general of the Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) which is in charge of carrying out the project.

"An internal road network has been built with sufficient room for loading and unloading goods on pavements, canals were opened to drain away rain water, and electricity and telephone services supplied," Subeimat said in an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

"The JIEC is still to set up an employment office to find work in the industrial city for job seekers and to issue work permits to non-Jordanians; it will also set up a vocational training centre and allow banks to open branches at the city," Subeimat said.

"Irbid was chosen as the site for the Al Hassan industrial city due to its important location near the main international routes linking Jordan with Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and because it is located near major towns like Mafrinj and Ramtha in the north," Subeimat added.

"The Al Hassan industrial city will be the second of its kind in

Jordan after the Sahab industrial city, built in the late 1970s.

According to Subeimat, Sahab houses 188 industrial businesses of which 60 currently export products to Arab and foreign countries. "The Al Hassan industrial city, built on a 420 dunum land, offers facilities to more than 80 factories and industrial concerns and it was deemed necessary in view of the growing demand on facilities for industrial projects in the Kingdom," Subeimat pointed out.

He said the rent at Irbid industrial city is less by 25 per cent than that paid for buildings and factories at the Sahab industrial city.

"However the same incentives and tax exemptions will be granted to investors in the Al Hassan industrial city at Irbid, on equal footing with those at Sahab industrial city," Subeimat said. "Apart from benefiting from the infrastructure at the industrial city, investors can either buy or rent buildings at reduced cost, benefit from credit offered them by the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) and also benefit from tax exemptions," said Subeimat.

In order to help promote the sale of products, Subeimat said, "JIEC was planning to set up a permanent industrial exhibition within the industrial city in Irbid."

Education conference warns of bleak future

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Ten million children throughout the Arab World are unable to attend school. Sixty per cent of the Arab population are illiterate — between the ages of 15 and 45. Furthermore, boys have better chances to attain education than girls and statistics show that these numbers increase every day.

Striving to reduce the numbers of uneducated and illiterate people, enhance the quality of education and ensure basic education for all by the year 2000, the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) focused its attention on the future of education in the Arab World in a conference held last week. The theme of the gathering was "education in the Arab World in the 21st Century." Attending the conference were education and economics specialists and consultants from Jordan, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Tunisia, Sudan, Morocco, North Yemen and Libya in addition to Switzerland, England, France, Canada and the United States.

The conference discussed how essential and productive education is both economically and socially; how to set goals — whether it should be derived from the developed countries or purely from tradition and religious aspects — as well as the economic angle and how to upgrade the quality of education in students and teachers, according to Dr. Victor Billeh, president of Jordan's National Centre for Education and Research.

Billeh said the government of Jordan had already embarked on a 10-year three-phase development plan which began in 1989. Its aim, also discussed and evaluated in the conference, is to build a comprehensive system and to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and ultimately to achieve fundamental reform.

The first phase which will take place between 1989-1992 includes a curriculum reform and a full range of new textbooks. Billeh said the teaching material was already in the process of being designed with 200 Jordanians working on it. It will be introduced this September and within five years there will be an entirely new curriculum and range of

textbooks for all grades.

The second phase from 1992 until 1995 involves extending compulsory education up to grade 10 from grade nine, revising the basic and secondary curricula into an approach that would emphasise creative thinking. Billeh added that by 1994, new procedures for examinations would be implemented to ensure a higher form of education.

From the years 1995 to 1998, the last phase will be implemented. It will be devoted to teachers, to improve their quality and provide them with training within the country and abroad," according to Billeh.

Billeh said that Jordan was among the few in the developing countries that does not have a problem with number of schools, rather the issue is quality. "About 200 existing schools which lack adequate facilities, such as libraries, laboratories, workshops, will be provided with necessary equipment and instructional technologies to attain better quality," according to Billeh. An additional 400 new schools will be constructed to meet the needs of the rapidly increasing school age. Now 48 per cent of Jordan's population are below the age of 15.

"Reputed schools, already accommodating some 238,000 students, will also be replaced with higher quality ones," he added.

Quite an ambitious goal to be achieved in only a decade. "But we cannot afford not to have a reform," Billeh stated. "The changes that are occurring worldwide in technology and the information that the students will be subjected to in the future are tremendous and we should prepare people to cope with change and improve their lives."

The consequences of not meeting the goals are severe, says Jawad Anani, a Jordanian economic consultant, pointing out that unemployment, deterioration of quality of education, a lack of response to solve issues like agriculture, technology etc. and complete social disturbances and unrest will surge if these goals are not achieved.

Statistics say that by the year 2000, the population in the Arab World will reach 273 million (it is currently 200 million). The elementary stage will be as high as 39.2 million by the year 2000. The secondary stage will add up to 23.3 mil-

lion. College students will figure some 3.7 million. The number of students will reach 66.2 million in the year 2000. "If the goals are not met, there is going to be an ever increasing number of uneducated, illiterate and unskilled people in the Arab World," said Anani.

Billeh feels optimistic that the goals of the ten-year reform plan will be achieved. Although there are economic risks, he said, a cost effective programme has been designed. But he did not go into details. The programme will be implemented gradually and thus it will not affect the students and teachers," he said.

Economists, however, are not so optimistic. The costs for renewing education systems throughout the Arab World are estimated at around \$57.5 billion by the year 2000. In Jordan alone, the reform plan is expected to cost \$950 million.

Not only are the costs of reform worrying, but Anani pointed out there is an evident impact of education in performance and "the current status in the Arab World is not a good one." Developing countries are spending so much on education and yet are not producing people for the skilled jobs for agriculture and science etc.

He said that an ideal system the Arab World should push for is to have six per cent of the population in the industrial fields, three per cent scientists and thought development, one per cent innovators and 90 per cent of the population in qualified skilled labour and semi-unskilled labour.

At present there are only 5,000 out of 200 million qualified as scientists and in the industrial fields. Innovators and the skilled labour markets are as low as 30 to 50 per cent in the Arab World, while the unskilled are around 50 per cent, according to statistics given by Anani.

Fulfilling everyone's right to education is a bigger task and should have priority over everything else. Basic education is essential to enhance productivity, food needs and job opportunities."

With 90 million children each year born in the developing countries, there will be considerable numbers of unemployed, unskilled and illiterate people if by the year 2000 the education system has not made drastic changes, many specialists fear.

Jordan Times

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Summit for sake of pan-Arab security

SEVERAL issues of utmost concern to the Arab peoples have been advanced to occupy the agenda of the Baghdad summit scheduled for May 28. All of the individual issues touted for discussion are of extreme importance to the present and future of the nation, but none so prominent and significant as the overall theme suggested by Jordan: Pan-Arab security.

Security of the Arab World may be such a wide and complicated concept that the best of experts might prefer to shy away from defining it. But, given the rapid changes and transformations that the globe has witnessed recently, there has to be a specific and timely definition that our leaders can agree to at the outset of their summit — or better still at the meeting of their foreign ministers in a few days' time.

It is not difficult, for instance, to see that pan-Arab security is different from what it had been in the cold war era: That it is now governed by a different set of factors and major groupings and players.

To take just one example, we need not look beyond the perceived threat of communism and how the changed world in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe should change our thinking and planning in order to shift our capabilities and resources to where they truly serve our best interests at this stage. Another solid example is the question of the conflict with Iran, and whether the strategic threat from that country equals or even comes near the danger of Soviet Jewish immigration to Israel. The West's campaign against Iraq, especially Israel's role in instigating and fomenting it, is yet another extremely important and urgent matter under which pan-Arab security has to be studied and defined. Democracy and much-needed democratic reforms in the Arab World are but vital concerns for our masses from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans, and they also have to be addressed seriously if we are to build and strengthen a new Arab national security on solid and lasting foundation.

In every single topic that will be tackled at the Baghdad summit, Jordan has to figure at the top, since it is us here in this country — Jordanians and Palestinians alike — who are the nearest to and the immediate target of the biggest threat that faces the Arab World today, namely Israeli expansionism and Zionist designs.

People who know this — and they are not necessarily only Jordanians and Palestinians — would like to call the Baghdad meeting the Jordan summit, and rightly so. The Iraqis at least know this, but hopefully the rest of Arab leaders will too. It is this front that needs to be strengthened in earnest, for the real danger to pan-Arab security is coming much more from the west now than it will from the east for a long, long time.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Arabic daily on Saturday described a message to the Arab League secretary general by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker on the eve of the Arab summit in Baghdad as a way of absorbing what could be absorbed of Arab anger over Washington's behaviour. The paper said that Washington wants to try to appease the Arabs lest they would take drastic decisions at their scheduled summit in the Iraqi capital. The message, copies of which have also been sent to Arab capitals, reflects the fact that Washington realises the importance Arab countries are attaching to this summit meeting and it is therefore trying to reduce Arab anger resulting from the continuing Jewish immigration into Palestine which enjoys U.S. blessings, the paper noted. The coming summit, the paper added, is not aimed at expressing Arab wrath but rather to take a collective stand with regard to the looming dangers resulting from this immigration. The paper said that the summit will be a forum where Arab leaders will re-emphasise their determination to pursue the struggle to regain their rights and lands; and therefore the Baker messages can by no means intimidate the Arabs or make them forget their legitimate rights.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily bitterly attacks the United States for providing precious services to Israel, thus enabling it to expand in the Arab region. With reference to the United States current attempts to mend fences with Ethiopia, Ibrahim Sakikha notes that Washington is trying to secure the emigration of 3,000 Ethiopian Jews to Israel in exchange for improved relations with Addis Ababa and financial assistance to the Ethiopian regime. Israel for its part, is providing weapons and training to the Ethiopian forces as part of the deal to arrange for the emigration, the writer continues. He says that the United States, which has been providing technology and aid to Moscow in exchange for the emigration of millions of Jews, is now applying the same pattern to Ethiopia; thus acting for Israel, its strategic ally, in providing further manpower for the Jewish state. The writer says that Washington's actions represent a gift to its friends, providing Israel with more Jews who will eventually try to expand and stretch Israel's borders at the expense of the Arab World.

Al Dustoor daily commented on a visit to Jordan by Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who the paper described, as a fighter for democracy in a brotherly Islamic country. Bhutto, as a friend to the Arabs, stated upon arrival in Amman Friday that her country will continue to extend support to Arab causes, and that the Soviet Jewish immigration into Palestine and the general situation in the occupied Arab territories will be discussed in talks with King Hussein and Prime Minister Mudar Badran. Bhutto's visit is expected to lend further strength to the already excellent ties between Amman and Islamabad; and in view of Jordan's friendly ties with India which is at loggerheads with Pakistan over Kashmir, Jordan is expected to caution Bhutto to opt for negotiations to end the regional conflict and could not doubt offer its good offices to help solve the problem.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Loopholes in proposed 'illegal gains' law

By Dr. Fahed Faneh

The government has recently put the final touches on a new draft legislation to address illegal gains. The draft law will be referred to the parliament in its upcoming extraordinary session, expected to start in early June, together with another law for economic crimes.

The draft defines illegal gains as any fixed or movable property a person obtained, for himself or for others, by using his public job in a wrong manner, and any increase in the wealth of that person which takes place during public service either for the person or the spouse or minor children if the increase is not warranted by their declared means, or if they failed to establish its legitimate source.

The law does not clearly define right and wrong sources of income. This may shed doubt on the income that an official could earn from external activities, memberships and other services which are

not clear whether they are arising from his position in part or in total.

More important, an official or an employee whose wealth grows is supposed to be guilty until he proves his innocence. The burden is on him to prove that he was not corrupt.

The law will be applicable to the prime minister, the ministers, the members of both higher and lower houses of parliament, the chairmen of the boards of directors and the general managers of companies if 40 per cent or more of their paid up capital is owned by the government and or the public sector corporations, and the presidents of all professional associations and labour unions, the Union of Charity Societies and the Jordan Cooperative Organisation. It is worth pointing out that companies with at least 40 per cent public sector ownership are in the rise due to the accelerating investments of the Social Security Corporation, a public

sector entity.

The draft picks up certain sensitive departments where almost all the staff, irrespective of the level of responsibility, are subjected to the law, such as tender committees, the Audit Bureau, the Customs Department, the Land and Survey Department, and the Income Tax Department.

The law will create a department at the Ministry of Justice specialising in illegal gains. The department will be headed by a high ranking judge to receive declarations, allegations, evidence and clarifications, and to follow up any delay in their submissions.

The crucial point in the law is that it obliges officials and employees in question to submit a detailed declaration listing all their property and forms of wealth including that of their wives and minor children. The declarations must be submitted within two months after the law becomes operational,

and will be repeated and updated every two years.

The declarations will then undergo a thorough scrutiny by legal committees which can demand further details and documentation, and ask all official and private sources for confirmation or additional information. Should these committees develop doubts in the declarations, they have the power to freeze all forms of wealth of any person except in as much as needed for his family's day to day expenses.

If the committee found reasons to believe that an illegal gain took place, or that the official has committed any crime, it will refer the results of its investigation to the court for trial. Punishment for illegal gain includes imprisonment with hard labour and a fine equal to the amount of illegal gain.

Other people involved as participants are treated just as the original person committing

the crime. However they can be pardoned if they cooperated in the investigation.

The delay or objection to submit a declaration can be punished by up to three years in prison and a fine ranging between JD 500 to 1,000.

For unknown reasons the law protects the secrecy of the declarations. However, the confidentiality could not be guaranteed due to many staffers who will read, examine, classify and file the declarations.

The case against any person for illegal gains expires five years after the end of the person's active service. This means that all illegal gains before 1985 are not subject to the law.

The obvious aim of this law is to fight corruption, but analysts observe that it does not deal with any new crime that is not already covered by current effective laws. Some observers are not happy about the too many laws to deal with corruption and economic crimes. They point out three negative results: First, giving the wrong impression that administrative corruption is wide-spread in Jordan, while all fair observers believe that the Jordanian civil servants are known to be honest and clean. Second, these laws may scare many officials and employees, that are otherwise efficient and honest, who may prefer to stay away from any public job, which the law considers a potential place for corruption. The third and most important point is that the declarations may operate as incentive for capital flight so that the wealth will be beyond the eyes of suspicion.

Free press, effective parliament and a system of accountability would be the best security against corruption, which we had witnessed in the past not due to lack of laws, but lack of applicability and respect of the laws.

Nigerian military tries to find formula for democracy

By Michelle Faul
The Associated Press

LAGOS, Nigeria — The military government has created two political parties in an effort to produce the first viable civilian government in Africa's most populous country, but critics see little chance of success.

They say Gen. Ibrahim Babangida's plans are doomed by tribalism, religious differences, power-hungry politicians and his own undemocratic methods.

People registering as members of the two parties appear to make their choice on the basis of tribal and religious loyalties.

The centre-right National Republican Convention attracts the Muslim northerners who have dominated politics in this West African nation of 100 million people.

Most people in the south, where Nigeria's oil riches lie, are Christians or followers of traditional, animist African religions. They tend to join the left-of-centre Social Democratic Party.

In October, Babangida's government banned 13 independent groups that hoped to contest elections promised for 1992, created the two parties and wrote their charters and platforms.

"It has dampened my enthusiasm," said Wole Soyinka, the Nigerian who won the 1986 Nobel Prize for literature. He said he would not join a party created by the government.

Experienced politicians and civil servants were banned from both parties. The government said it wanted to cleanse politics of corruption and nepotism — the problems the army cited in overthrowing two prior civilian administrations.

Babangida seized power on Aug. 27, 1985, becoming the sixth military man to govern Nigeria since independence from Britain in 1960.

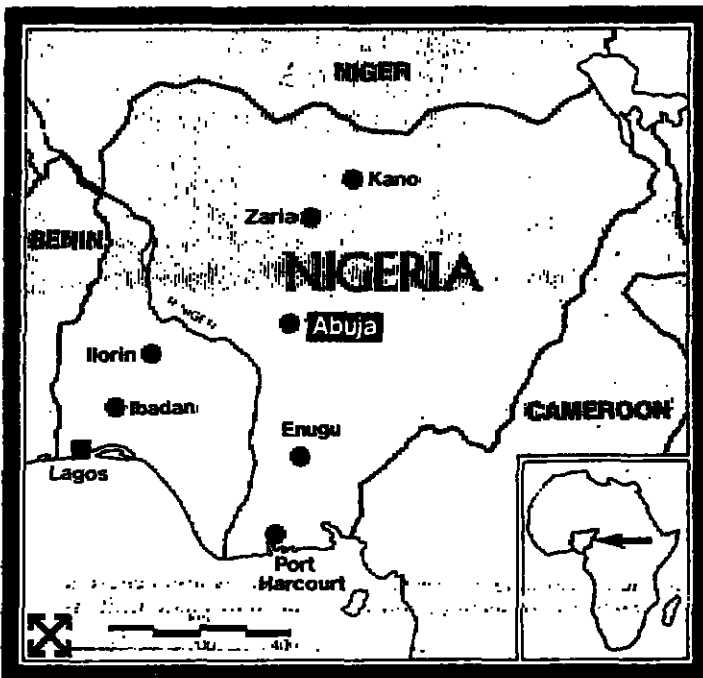
He has survived three attempted coups, the last on April 22 by plotters trying to break the political hold of northerners.

The latest plot "highlighted the fact that the political transition programme is not workable," a university professor said, on condition of anonymity.

"The two-party system will only worsen the north-south division. Muslims or Christians will be set on candidates of their own religion in 1992 — if the regime survives until then," the professor added.

In a speech to the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Club, Lawyer Leon Mbakwe said, "We hardly chance government unless by violent means."

The club's mission is to spread the late black American leader's ideal of non-violent change. Its literature warns of "Monsters



who planted violence into the country's body politic... and even kill their political opponents on gaining power."

Much criticism has greeted the ban on former politicians, despite past election fraud.

"No one goes into the African jungle without using an existing footpath as a guide," said Ibi Sofekun, president of the Nigeria Junior Chamber of Commerce. "The person may decide to blaze a new trail... but he has to start somewhere otherwise he will end up in the jaws of the lion."

Delly Ajufo, a businessman, said some banned politicians were giving younger ones cars and money in hopes of taking over parties not yet formed.

Ajufo said he had dropped out of this "new breed" of politics.

"I don't think the transition programme will solve the problem," he told an interviewer. "In addition to the possibility of the oldies hijacking the system through their proteges, even the youth still view politics as the route to make money."

The national electoral commission denies the people are apathetic, but also refuses to say how many have registered with the two parties.

Chief Ben Obi, a veteran politician, said: "Already, people are being promised contracts and other largesse if they register for a particular party."

Lawyer Niyi Ademola, an active participant in the "new breed" politics, said with more hope: "New breed politicians can cope if they get the chance to resolve issues, rather than the military interpreting every squabble as a crisis and taking over."

Babangida's chief of staff, Gen. Sani Abacha, has said the army is "tired of playing ping-pong with the people."

Baltic republics are only tip of independence iceberg

By Ann Imse
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — If President Mikhail S. Gorbachev imposed strict sanctions on Lithuania in hopes of scaring other republics away from pressing for independence, it's not working.

The sight of Lithuania suffering under a Kremlin embargo on fuel, manufactured goods and raw materials has prompted the other two Baltic republics, Latvia and Estonia, to be more careful in phrasing their demands for independence. They have set unspecified transition periods, but have nonetheless declared their firm intention to leave the Soviet Union.

In other republics, activists are copying the Baltics' early independence steps.

"I think in half a year we'll see that not only the Baltic republics but some other republics — first of all the Caucasus republics — will say they want real independence," said sociologist Peteris Lakis, a leader of the Latvian People's Front political movement.

On May 6, representatives of people's fronts in eight republics met with several reform movements from Russia in Kiev to form a union of democratic forces "to help republics quit the U.S.S.R. ... and to ensure the empire disbands peacefully," according to Rukh, the Ukrainian People's Front.

Gorbachev has said he believes splitting the Soviet Union would bring massive violence, worse than that of the 1966-76 cultural revolution in China, when radical leftists tried to purge that country of bourgeois influence.

The Soviet leader has pledged to prevent that from happening but indicated he wants to avoid a violent crackdown.

Two weeks ago in Sverdlovsk, he told citizens: "Some say, 'let this empire fall apart', while others say, 'we need to restore order with an iron fist'. Neither has any connection to serious policy."

Across the Soviet Union, other regions are rejecting Kremlin authority.

The parliament of the Caucasus republic of Georgia has demanded negotiations on independence. Pro-independence parties are campaigning for seats in the Georgian parliament.

Neighboring Azerbaijan exploded in virtual armed revolt against Kremlin control in January and remains under military control. Moscow moved in forces to quell the republic's battles with Armenia over a disputed enclave.

The Armenian parliament has defied the Kremlin and ordered local draftees to remain in Armenia to work on rebuilding areas wrecked by the 1988 earthquake.

In the Ukrainian agricultural and industrial heartland, where Moscow most fears nationalism, a pro-independence political party has formed. In Lvov, activists won control of the city council in a recent election.

In Moldova, Mircea Snegur won the presidency from Communist party chief Pyotr Luchins-

ky with the backing of advocates of greater autonomy or independence. He has called on his republic to refuse to support Gorbachev's blockade of Lithuania.

Even in Russia, the republic's parliament will consider a "sovereignty" resolution at the session that begins May 16. The extent of its support is not clear.

Gorbachev has shown no sign that he is willing to abandon his demand that Lithuanian separatists begin reversing their March 11 declaration of independence before he negotiates with them.

He is calling for a new Soviet federation giving all of the republics greater autonomy. New legislation establishes a mechanism for republics to secede, but only after a lengthy waiting period.

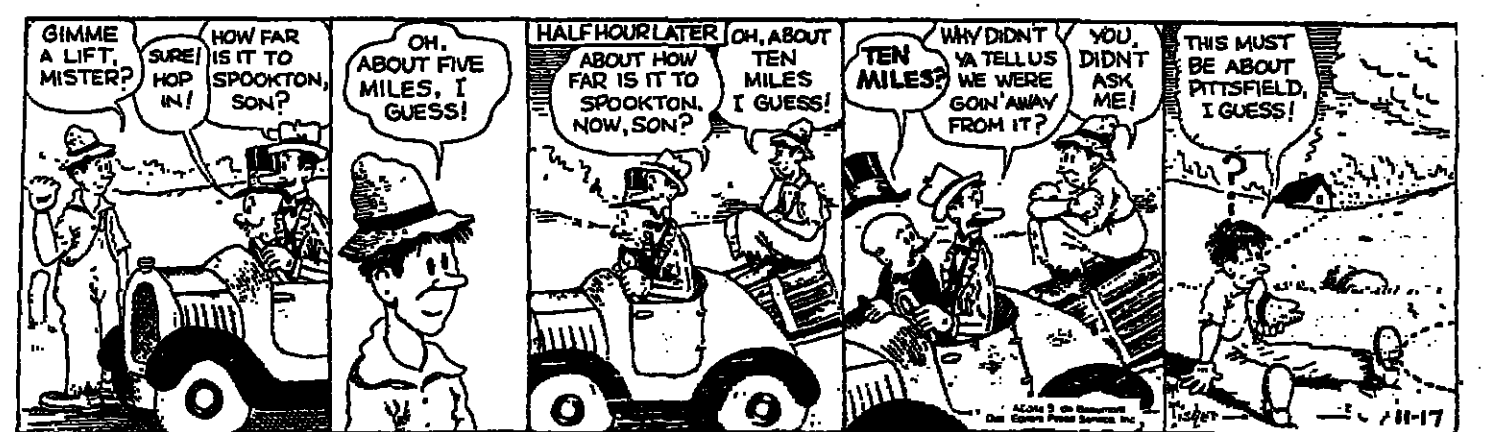
In many such binds in the past five years, Gorbachev has made an unexpected leap of faith that not only solves the immediate problem but takes him well beyond it.

Until December, Gorbachev rejected the idea of multiparty politics. But in January, he suddenly threw his support behind the idea and by mid-February pushed the reform past party hard-liners.

However, Gorbachev has yet to make such a leap to help resolve the country's ethnic problems.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees from ethnic violence make up "an incendiary material which may explode at any moment," Boris Oleinik told the independent postfactum news service.

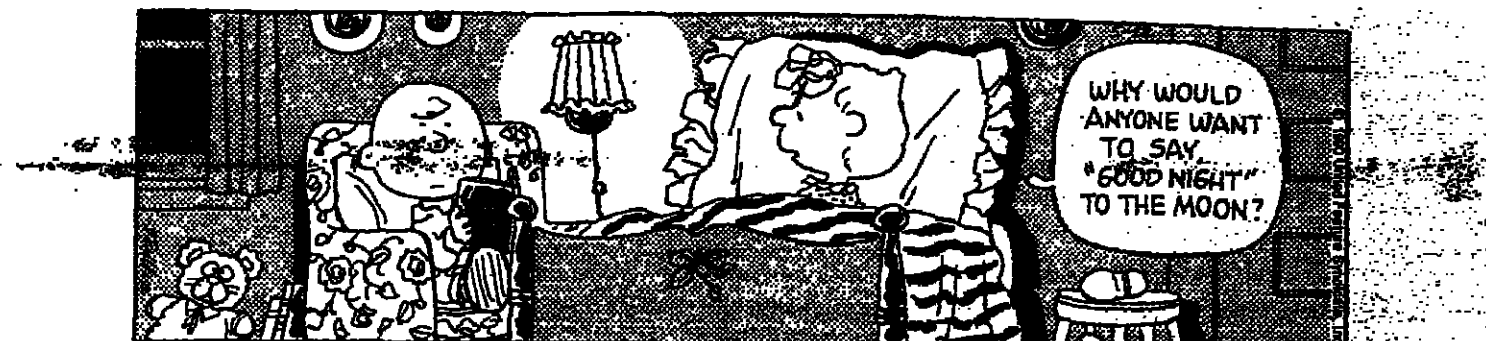
Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



LETTERS

Moral inspiration

To the Editor:

I APPLAUD the recent brave decision of the Ministry of Interior to ban further male hairdressers of women. Their moral courage is an inspiration to us all. But surely decency requires that they not stop there. How dare a man touch the teeth of a woman! Rid the country of men dentists. And what about obstetricians! No man is going to deliver a baby of mine. And let's not even speak of gynecologists! The women of Jordan stand with you (though, of course, not too close) as do our valiant husbands and brothers who protect us.

Muna L. Issa
P.O. Box 101010
Amman

Editor's note: The above letter was received before the ban on male hairdressers was finally lifted.

Focus on child literature raises soul-searching queries

By Sarah Kilian
Special to the Jordan Times

TO WHAT extent have we come to realise the child's basic needs and interests? For how long will we treat the child as a passive recipient of our own desires and orders? And what are the root reasons for this social workers' desire to impose their own views on children's literature? These were some of the soul-searching questions raised at a Swedish-Jordanian conference held in Amman last week that tackled the problem and the obstacles in the field of children's literature. According to most of the participants, answers to these questions need the acceptance of some basic facts and realities.

"We have to realise from the very beginning that the child is an individual that has his/her own language, interests and problems that differs from the world of adults," said Mona Uricat Henning, who is involved in translating children's literature from Swedish to Arabic. "To want the best for your child, providing for him or her all the necessary things you think is right, is in fact not enough."

According to Stefan Malqvist, a well known Swedish writer of children's literature, "children must be given an intrinsic value; it is not a period in one's life only to be passed. As a child you learn to meet the world and these lessons are never forgotten."

While many authors and psychiatrists share the view that childhood is the most important stage in human life and that it must be given a lot of attention, the Arab society, according to Henning, views children in a very "traditional" way. "... (as) a little one who understands nothing and who must obey his elders' orders and wishes without discussion or participation."

"It is an education that is based on threats and punishment, and with the adult world as the only model."

authoritative domination we kill in our children the spirit of creativity, determination and self-independence," Henning said. "Consequently, a new dependent, negative generation with no self-confidence will grow..." she told the Jordan Times in an interview. "Children hate preachings and advice, and the traditional parental approach could be counter-productive."

In 1945, according to Malqvist,

Changes in methods

The importance of changes in the methods of raising children and educating them was one of the key issues discussed among the participants of the Amman conference.

Henning, a Jordanian who is married to a Swede, in her response to questions raised in the discussions, stressed the dire need to change the method

its fantasies and its fertile imagination."

In the case of Jordan, the size of the average family hinders the parents from giving their children the proper attention, according to many experts. "It is not that parents do not want to provide any time for their children; the problem lies in their inability to take care of so many children at the same time," commented a member of the audience at the conference.

'Parental apathy'

Unfortunately, this is reflected on the books bought for Arab children, said an expert. "Many parents seem to be ignorant of the need to provide quality books for children or even do not have the interest or the time to go and look by themselves for books for their children," said the director of "Arab Cartoon," a highly appreciated children's magazine. He criticised what he described as parental carelessness and lack of interest towards educating children outside the school's realm.

"A parent once came to me asking to cancel his children's subscription for the magazine, and explained that his children 'waste' much time reading it many times and this must affect their studies at school," he said.

In Sweden, according to Henning, 85 per cent of the children between three and eight spend an average of 38 minutes every day for either reading or listening to their parents reading to them. In Jordan, she said, "I expect very little of this."

Another basic problem, according to many participants, is the high cost of and unavailability of quality books in the local market. Parents give little attention to the advantages of books for children and underestimate their importance and impact, according to Henning. "Parents do not seem to notice

"The discovery that the child has a mind to absorb on its own account produces a revolution in education. We can now understand easily why the first period in human development, in which character is formed, is the most important. At no other age has the child greater need of an intelligent help...we should help the child, therefore, no longer because we think of him as a creature, puny and weak, but because he is endowed with great creative energies...when...we realise that the mind of the child in infancy is different from ours, that we cannot reach it by verbal instruction, nor intervene directly in the process of its passing from the unconscious to the conscious...then the whole concept of education changes...."

— Maria Montessori, from the Absorbant Mind

ist, the story of a very rich self-confident girl, Pippi Longstocking, was a breakthrough for Astrid Lindgren, now a very well-known Swedish author of children's books. "Pippi" lived in a house of her own without parents and was strong enough to carry a horse. Pippi was an exaggerated figure of fantasy, but for the child readers she represented a kind of safety-valve for their secret dreams and fulfillment of wishes, Malqvist said. "It is like revenge upon authority trying to suppress children. But the tone of the book is warm and humorous."

of "authoritative education" as well as the importance of meeting children's needs by ways of befriending them.

"We are not aware of the child's basic needs," she explained. "The child lives in a private world of his or her own which the adults are not aware of or one which they do not try to make an effort to know about. We have a tendency to forget that the child is an individual who has different needs and desires and whose world differs a lot from ours. It is but discovering the child in us is what may be the first step, entering the child's world in all its



"Many parents seem to be ignorant of the need to provide quality and look by themselves for books for their children." books for children or even do not have the interest or the time to go

that the child may read the book several times and that they need not buy many books. It is just that they must choose for them a number of interesting books that their children love. Illustrated books are very important in the pre-school period in fertilising the imagination as well as improving the language."

Malqvist also emphasised the importance of illustrated books by pointing out that "language is instrument that can be refined through books."

"Sometimes we do not know what we think or feel until we have the right words to express our ideas or emotions...factual information is one thing, but I certainly also believe in fictional information...it is softer,

more tentative perhaps, but it gives us increased possibilities in mutual and self-understanding."

In most of the countries in the world, Henning points out, "there happens to be specialised people for children's books who take good care of matching photos with words and trying to provoke the senses of the child as well as painting pictures that interest and attract the child."

Yet, in taking into account that these kind of books cost a lot, especially those in colour, this fact, according to many lecturers, stands not only as an obstacle for the parents but also for writers.

It seems that the child is the

one who suffers the consequences; for there happens to be little concern in writings for children. According to Jordanian statistics, given by Mary Fashieh, another lecturer, there has not been more than 145 books for children over the last five years in the Kingdom. These include books about information (17), drama (17), poetry (11) and story (100). In Sweden, according to Malqvist, 1,000 books for children are published annually.

Lack of interest in children's books has other elements which Jordan is to face. First and foremost, as summarised by Issam Zawawi, is that most of the writers do not understand children "They use vocabular-

ies of high standard, not differentiating between several ages as well as the different stages of the child's growth and understanding," he said.

Also, according to Zawawi, most writers concentrate on limited subjects such as national and historical issues, ignoring the child's problems and interests.

There is a minority of literature writers specialised in pre-school education, he said.

Asked how one can write in the magical way she writes for children, attracting millions of children around the world, Astrid Lindgren said: "I write to please the child in me; I write only things that I know and that I live."

World population — pushing limits

THE 1990s will see the fastest growth in human numbers in all history. At present the world's population is increasing by three people a second — about a quarter of a million every day. Some 96 million people — an extra Thailand and Korea — will be added every year, a whole extra China over the decade.

Just a few years ago, it seemed as if the rate of growth was slowing almost everywhere. The world's population seemed set to stabilise around 10.2 billion towards the end of the next century.

The situation now looks less promising, as the State of World Population 1990, just published by the United Nations Population Fund, reveals.

Progress in reducing birth rates was slower than expected. Countries which had substantially reduced their birth rates in the late 1960s and early 1970s, stalled in their progress. And in some countries birth rates actually rose in the two decades up to 1980-85.

These setbacks forced the United Nations to reassess the population outlook. In 1986, it projected that the world would house 6,122 million people by the end of the century. Now it has had to raise that figure to 6,251 million — an extra Japan added to the total. Looking further ahead, to 2025, the U.N. now expects 8,467 people — 200 million more than it predicted five years ago.

The world is now on course for reaching a stable population, sometimes towards the end of the next century, of closer to 11 billion than 10 billion. Indeed, if future progress in cutting birth rates is not achieved we would be headed towards a total of up to 14 billion people.

This is serious — especially in view of a world food crisis which is creeping upon us almost unnoticed. During the 1980s, food production has lost ground to population in many countries. In Africa, 25 countries out of 43 experienced a drop in per capita cereal production. And Latin America's performance was even worse: 17 countries out of 23 suffered a decline.

Today, the global food situation looks shakier than at any time in the past 15 years. We can no longer rely on automatic harvest

increases every year. World food security now depends on the performance of North American farmers, and that depends on a global weather system that is increasingly unstable. Following the drought-hit U.S. harvest of 1988, world cereal stocks dropped from 24 per cent of global consumption in 1986-87 to a dangerously low 17 per cent. Meanwhile, many countries are running out of reserves of good cropland. The best and most accessible land is already in use. As a result the area of land available per person declined at the rate of 1.9 per cent during the 1980s.

The human race now appears to be pushing against new limits of growth. Our numbers, our lifestyles and our technologies have reached the stage where destruction of the environment has reached dangerous levels. We are sawing through the branch that is holding us and if we carry on as before, it may break and bring us crashing down with it.

Not everyone admits that population plays any role in environmental damage. Soil erosion is often blamed on the poverty of the South, while damage to tropical forests, oceans and climate are laid at the door of affluence in the North.

The real situation is more complex. Two factors may decide how much damage we do per person to our environment. One is our lifestyle and how much we consume. The other is the kind of technology we use and how much damage or waste it creates. But population decides how many persons there are — and this is what fixes the total level of damage.

Population growth is responsible for a far greater share of deforestation, for example, than commercial logging or ranching. Much of the forest cleared in developing countries becomes cropland for growing populations that cannot be accommodated on existing farmland. These populations may be responsible for more 85 per cent of the loss of forest cover.

Of course poverty is partly to blame for soil erosion: poor peasants cannot afford fertilizers or the conservation measures needed for protecting the soil. But population growth has its own effect, forcing farmers to



exhaust the soil, or to use marginal land. And unchecked soil erosion could cause a drop of nearly 30 per cent in food production from rain-fed cropland. It is, clearly, a direct threat to human life in developing countries.

Climate change is a threat to human life across the globe. The nature of that threat is now well known. Most projections expect that by the middle of the next century average world temperatures will rise by up to 2.8 degrees Celsius. No previous climate shift in earth history has happened so swiftly.

As ecological zones shift, the area of forest cover will decline. Sea-level rises could lead to disastrous flooding of many ports and deltas, displacing, for example, as much as 10 per cent of Bangladesh's population or 16 per cent of Egypt's. Rainfall in mid-latitudes may decrease, hitting the world's chief source of surplus grain, the North American mid-west.

So far the lion's share of the blame for global warming lies with the developed countries. The average developed world resident adds around 3.2 tonnes of carbon dioxide (the gas responsible for about half of global warming) each year to the atmosphere, almost four times the level added by each Third World dweller.

But this situation has been changing. The South's emissions of greenhouse gases has been growing. Annual carbon dioxide output from trees burnt in deforestation almost trebled between 1950 and 1980-85. Emissions from industrial sources in the Third World rose by almost 16 times.

As developing countries industrialise, lifestyles and technologies will come to resemble those of the North. The world car population, for example, is projected to grow from its present 400 million to 700 million over the next twenty years — twice as fast as the human population. Much of that growth will occur in the South which currently owns only 12 per cent of the world car fleet. South Korea alone adds 600,000 cars to its roads every year. If these trends and population growth continue, developing countries will be emitting 16.5 billion tonnes of carbon annually by 2025 — over four times as much as developed countries today.

Clearly many lines of action are called for to save the environment for future generations. Changes in lifestyles will be needed: reductions in levels of consumption — and wastage — in the North; increases in recycling. — UNFPA News feature.

APPOINTMENT IN ITALY

AMMAN-ROME

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Soviets reschedule, slash Egypt's debt

CAIRO (AP) — The Soviet Union has promised Egypt massive debt relief that includes repayment in goods rather than cash, the government's Middle East News Agency (MENA) said Saturday.

Figures in the state-run agency's report reflect that Egypt can clear its debt to Moscow by paying only about seven per cent of the debt's value if computed at the official rate of exchange.

The report was unsourced. A government official told the AP that it came from President Hosni Mubarak's office. The president returned Friday night from a foreign trip that included almost four days in Moscow.

Middle East News Agency said repayment will begin after an interest-free six-year grace period. It will be in "unconventional Egyptian goods," the agency said, excluding cotton, Egypt's main export, and a few other

agricultural products.

Egypt's foreign debt totals almost \$50 billion. Most is owed to Western nations, and Cairo is negotiating with the International Monetary Fund for debt restructuring and other relief.

Easing the debt burden was among the main objectives of Mubarak's tour, which took him to China, North Korea and Britain in addition to the Soviet Union.

Egyptian officials said Mubarak also won debt relief from China and North Korea during the tour. They gave no details, but \$70 million of Egypt's \$167 million debt to Peking comes due this year.

The Soviet debt entails a mixture of civilian and military loans. Most were incurred in the 1960s and the early 1970s.

The news agency said the debt totalled 2.2 billion rubles, or \$3.58 billion at the official rate of



Hosni Mubarak



Mikhail Gorbachev

\$1.63 to the ruble.

But the reported new agreement refigured the amount to be paid at 670 million Egyptian pounds, or \$252 million. Thus, negotiators apparently based calculations on 8.7 roubles to a dollar compared with the official rate of 0.6 ruble to one dollar.

Last November, the Soviet government instituted a second exchange rate offering six rubles to the dollar for tourists' cash

transactions. Trade remains at the official rate.

This is the first reported case of the Soviets revaluing a ruble debt to hard currency at a more realistic rate. While the 8.7-ruble rate exceeds the best government rate, it remains far below the rate on Moscow's black market of about 15 rubles to the dollar.

Middle East News Agency gave no details of negotiations leading to the agreement, a boon to cash-strapped Egypt.

Labour unrest mars German unification

By Mark Fritz
Associated Press

EAST BERLIN — The dream of creating a greater Germany has become haunted by grim estimates of the human and economic costs of unification.

In the past eight days, East German teachers, train workers, farmers and textile workers have held sporadic strikes to demand job protection in a unified Germany.

The strikes were the latest in a growing tide of labour unrest in the country, where many people want free market wealth but are worried about giving up socialist subsidies.

In West Germany, voters in two states last weekend dealt Chancellor Helmut Kohl a stunning setback that was seen as a mini-referendum on unification.

Not only did his governing coalition lose both states, it lost control of the Upper House of Parliament, which must ratify some of the laws that will be passed for unification.

The opposition Social Democrats, who favour a slower pace of unification, won both states and control of the Upper House.

The left-leaning Social Democrats hope the inevitable pain of converting a socialist system to a capitalist economy will increase their chances in the Dec. 2 West German elections.

West Germans fear higher taxes, deflated buying power and rising interest rates as the cost for bailing out the ailing East German economy and converting it to a free market.

East Germans fear widespread unemployment, Western-style prices for basic necessities and second-class citizenship in a united Germany.

With this backdrop, Kohl and East German Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere signed a treaty Friday billed as a blueprint for economic and social unification that is to take place on July 2. The West German mark will become the official East German currency.

But East Germans still will only make about one-third of the salaries of West Germans. Economists also estimate that 500,000 to two million workers will lose their jobs as East German factories, now run by the state, are forced to deal with operating losses and foreign competition.

Kohl wants Westerners to have an incentive for investing in East Germany's moribund industrial sector, while Maiziere wants some limits on how much property West Germans can own.

De Maiziere, like Kohl, would like to see unification come quickly and has been at odds with his own Social Democrats, who are part of his governing coalition.

But de Maiziere also has pressed the West Germans for more than they are willing to give — perhaps not enough to completely satisfy the Social Democrats, but enough to drag out the talks.

Algeria cracks down on black market

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria is carrying out one of its most concerted crackdowns in years on a thriving black market that employs tens of thousands of young people and is seen as a major cause of inflation, officials said Wednesday.

As a result of the campaign, the black market value of the Algerian dinar has soared to its highest level in four years, traders said.

They said the dinar was now dealing on the black market at around three to the French franc (or 17 to the dollar), compared to six to the franc 10 days ago.

The official rate has re-

mained stable at around 1.5 dinars to the franc.

Some black market currency dealers said they had suspended business until the rate stabilised.

A cartoon in the daily Al Chaab Wednesday showed a man in a boxing ring giving a powerful punch to a French franc note, the main foreign currency traded in Algeria.

A customs official told Algerian radio that since the start of the crackdown on May 1 goods worth one billion dinars (\$125 million) and bank notes worth 20 million francs (\$3.6 million) had been seized.

He said the merchandise, seized at airports, ports and land borders, included clothes, cosmetics, food, jewellery, spare parts, drugs, gold and electronic goods.

The state-run media has also reported police swoops on black market shops and sidewalk stalls in central and suburban Algiers.

Black market traders, known locally as "trabandiers," form a powerful parallel economy that controls billions of dinars outside the banking system.

Their activities have largely been tolerated because they offer youth employment and

consumers goods that would be otherwise unavailable.

But Prime Minister Mouloud Hamrouche has called the big traders "bloodsuckers" and accused them of instigating acts of violence in the country to sabotage a reform programme.

Officials say the market is a major drain of funds from productive sectors of the economy and a big cause of inflation, officially put at 13 per cent last year.

The black market is the source of most hard currency for ordinary Algerians wishing to travel abroad or import cars and other consumer goods.

Chrysler to produce new sports car

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Chrysler Corporation officially announced Friday it will produce its pricey Dodge Viper sports car, with the first 200 of the Corvette competitors to be available in the 1992 model year.

Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca said the Viper, which debuted in prototype form at the Detroit auto show in January 1989, was expected to generate 400 horsepower from its all-new V-10 engine and would cost "under \$50,000." He wouldn't be more exact about the price.

Iacocca said his engineers told him they believed the sleek convertible, with an integrated roll bar and exhaust pipes built into a cutaway side, will be able to go from 0 to 60 miles per hour (mph) (100 kilometres per hour) in 3.9 seconds. It will reach a top speed of 188 mph (300 kilometres per hour).

Chrysler officials at a news conference said they eventually expect to produce about 5,000 Vipers a year, to be sold at 300 to 500 U.S. dealerships.

Iacocca said developing the Viper had cost Chrysler "tens and tens of millions" — not hundreds of millions, "of dollars, adding it can make money for the company at a sales pace of 5,000 cars a year."

Among the team that came up with the Viper concept was Chrysler consultant Carroll Shelby, the father of the popular Shelby Cobras.

Chrysler says the Viper is the first product produced by a computer-driven "conceptual design and rendering system," which is supposed to cut by 25 per cent the time it takes to bring a totally new car to market.

Iacocca said the Viper would be made in this country, but he was not more specific.

Chrysler also is working on a new line of sleek, mid-size cars and an additional model for its profitable Jeep line, among other vehicles.

Friday's news conference caps a six-city tour promoting the quality of Chrysler cars. Iacocca claims they now equal Japanese models and are the safest on the road.

He told shareholders the company's \$15.6 billion, five-year product development plan would pay off.

"I think we've got a good programme. We'll come back in the next six months," he said after the meeting in Universal City.

Iacocca acknowledged at the meeting that the company's difficulties have hurt its share price.

"Nobody in this room is more frustrated than I am at our stock sitting there at about \$17 a share today," he said.

European sour crude oil markets still oversupplied

LONDON (R) — Mediterranean and Rotterdam spot markets are still awash with sour sulphurous crudes, and it is Iranian oil that is the main culprit, European oil traders said.

"The market is basically massively oversupplied," said one trader. Rotterdam storage facilities were so full that sellers were having severe difficulties moving material, he said.

Another trader said that supply overhang was worse in the Mediterranean where Iranian material faces stiff competition from Urals, the Soviet export blend.

"The Mediterranean situation is still more difficult than the north," the trader said.

A flotilla of Iranian cargoes arriving on the European spot market was widely seen as triggering April's collapse in world oil prices, forcing the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to convene an emergency meeting in Geneva in early May.

OPEC agreed on an output cut of 1.445 million barrels per day (bpd).

But Iranian heavy prices have shown few signs of recovering from recent lows. On a delivered Mediterranean basis, the grade fetches a discount of about \$2.60 to \$2.70 a barrel to North Sea Brent crude and in Rotterdam is around 10 cents higher.

Iranian light is assessed at a premium of around 90 cents to the heavy grade.

As recently as March, Iranian heavy oil was assessed around \$2 below dated Brent.

Reasonable buying of Iranian material in the last two weeks has helped to mop up some of the excess — some 10 cargoes have been reported traded — but oversupply persists.

But one trader said some of the buying may not have been net purchases, as refiners have sold out other more expensive grades and bought back Iranian crude at bargain prices.

Assurances last week by Kuwait Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Sabah that the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) would supply its European refineries from the spot market raised speculation that KPC would buy some of the Iranian oil surplus.

But so far, on best information available, KPC seems to have bought only light Libyan ES Sider and not Iranian material.

Behind the dumping of Iranian barrels on the spot market has been Iran's loss of Far Eastern long-term customers in the last year. Iran is also denied access to the U.S. market.

New credits extended by commercial banks to Eastern Europe in the fourth quarter totalled \$2 billion, a pace unchanged from the previous three months. New claims increased by \$800 million each for the Soviet Union and East Germany which at the same time withdrew \$500 million worth of its deposits.

The survey is based on data reported by banks in the group of ten leading industrialised countries plus banks in Luxembourg, Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Norway, Spain, Bahamas, Bahrain, Cayman Islands, Hong Kong, Netherlands Antilles and Singapore as well as branches of U.S. banks in Panama.

position after adding a further \$3.5 billion to its deposits. Malaysia's deposits with the banks reporting to BIS went up by \$1.3 billion, described in the survey as another significant increase.

Identified claims on Latin American countries, which have declined continuously since 1987, fell by a further \$3.2 billion. Claims on Brazil and Argentina contracted by \$2.2 billion and \$1.4 billion respectively, partly as a result of write-offs and debt conversion programmes.

Deposits by members of OPEC increased by \$7.2 billion after declining by \$6.8 billion in the previous quarter. At the same time, claims on OPEC countries rose by \$5.7 billion.

Third World increases deposits

BASEL, Switzerland (AP) — Third World countries, led by Taiwan and China, substantially increased their deposits in commercial banks of the industrialised nations, according to a survey of the fourth quarter of 1989.

The survey, compiled by the Basel-based Bank for International Settlements (BIS) and released Friday, said new deposits by non-OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) Third World countries rose by \$14.6 billion while claims on them by the reporting banks dropped by \$4.7 billion.

It said Taiwanese deposits went up by \$3.7 billion and that the country had repaid \$1.9 billion worth of earlier loans.

China eliminated its net debtor

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Taiwan's stock market suffers dramatic reversal

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's stock market, which once seemed to exist only to make millionaires out of housewives, is suffering a dramatic reversal in fortunes as investors dump stocks and analysts forecast further declines.

The market dropped sharply once again Friday, with the weighted index losing 6.4 per cent to end at 7,416.96, its lowest point since April 1989.

Friday's fall also placed the index 40.6 per cent below the index's all-time high of 12,495.34 Feb. 2 this year — a shocking turnaround for a market that soared 88 per cent in 1989, 119 per cent in 1988 and 120 per cent in 1987.

"The iron bubble has got some

serious cracks," said John Engle, president of Hoare Govett in Taiwan.

Analysts say the market is paying for the tremendous rises of the past, which occurred without relation to the underlying value of the companies.

Market sluff

"You have \$200 billion worth of fluff in this market. Why is it going down? If you held up a supertanker in the air with your right arm, eventually you'd get tired and it'd come down," said Peter Kurz, managing director of Baring Securities in Taiwan.

Illegal margin lenders, who have financed up to a third of all

trades, are forcing clients to liquidate their positions — "cutting heads" in the local slang.

Even the big players, known for manipulating the market to their advantage, are having serious financial troubles and some are defaulting on trades, brokers said.

Most of Friday's losses came in the final 45 minutes of trade as rumours swept the market of defaults among some major market players.

James Lin, analyst at Ting Kong Securities, said there was no support for the market in the near term.

Analysts disagree on how low the market will go before turning around again.

ECONOMIC NEWS IN BRIEF

Gulf states to pay university debt

BAHRAIN (R) — Seven Gulf Arab states which founded the Arabian Gulf University will soon start paying off at least part of its 20-million-dinar (\$53-million) debt, Bahrain's Education Minister Ali Fakhro said Saturday. He said education ministers from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) made a "definite financial commitment" at a meeting in Bahrain last Tuesday.

"The various members assured us they are willing to pay and made a much more definite commitment than before — I am more optimistic this time," Fakhro told Reuters. Regular payments to four main foreign contractors who built the 41-million-dinar (\$109-million) campus stopped in 1986. But they continued work, finishing the project in 1988. The firms are South Korea's Daewoo Industrial Company, Taiwan's Ret Ser Engineering Agency, Saudi Arabia's Rabya Landscaping and the UAE-Australian joint venture, Al Habtoor Leighton. They were owed initial fees of 12 million dinars (\$33 million) but interest and compensation for additional costs have nearly doubled the amount. Some of the firms have said they would have to take the case to court if no solution was found. Fakhro declined to give details but said he would meet the contractors soon to discuss methods of payment. Industry sources say low oil prices in the mid-1980s and the eight-year Iran-Iraq war undermined the ability of some founders to meet their financial commitments.

Egyptair to buy five Boeings

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's national carrier Egyptair has agreed in principle to buy five Boeing 737-500 aircraft, a spokesman for the airline said last week. General Sales Manager Abdul Rahman Al-Daly told Reuters the deal, worth approximately \$160 million, was approved by Egyptair's board of directors Tuesday and would be signed within a few months. Finance for the deal was being put together by the Paris-based Union de Banques Arabes et Francaises (UBAF). "Financially we are in a good position," said Al-Daly. He said negotiations for the planes had been going on for four to five months said that the Boeing jets had been chosen in preference to Fokker aircraft. The airplanes will be used on both domestic and external routes, he added.

Algeria boosts producer prices

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria has raised support prices for producers of grains and legumes in a bid to spur local output, the Algerian News Agency (APS) reported. The agency said minimum prices guaranteed by the state for a range of products including wheat, barley, rice, lentils, beans and chick peas, had been raised an average of 6.4 per cent for the 1989-90 season and five per cent for 1990-91. Hard wheat growers, for example, will receive at least 500 dinars (\$63) per 100 kilos in 1989-90 compared to 400 dinars (\$50) the year before. Algeria's booming population is increasingly dependent on food imports and roughly three-quarters of wheat consumed now comes from abroad.

Electrolux profits slide

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden's AB Electrolux reported a 41 per cent fall in net profit in the first quarter of the year to 511 million crowns (\$84 million), and said it planned an acquisition in Hungary. Electrolux blamed the drop on sluggish demand for its core products of large household appliances such as refrigerators and washing machines. Sales were up one per cent from first-quarter 1989 at 21.31 billion crowns (\$3.52 billion). The company said it was also unable to recoup higher costs in increasingly competitive markets. Sales of Electrolux kitchen appliances fell in the United States, and in Britain, where high interest rates had dampened demand, the company said. Electrolux said it was reviewing its operations and cost structure and refraining from company acquisitions.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Saturday, May 19, 1990				
Central Bank official rates				
	Buy	Sell	Japanese yen (for 100)	436.5 409.1
U.S. dollar	668.0	672.0	Dutch guilder	360.5 362.5
Pound Sterling	1126.5	1135.7	Swedish crown	110.5 111.6
Deutsche mark	404.9	407.2	Italian lire (for 100)	53.1 55.4
Swiss franc	475.4	478.3		
French franc	120.1	120.8		

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY MAY 20, 1990
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Much conversation and discussion with those in the know will be needed if you are to get any benefits from their information under today's three moon square aspects.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You need to keep your mind on cheerful subjects and ways to work out the various plans you have in mind; concentrating upon the mental ambitions you have.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Listen to what one of influence has to suggest and follow as closely as you can and sidestep a confrontation with one of a demanding nature.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get some new formulas from a long-time associate for developing your special aptitude and later make sure you do not make demands of your friends.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Consider with how you can get more benefits from usual activities but make sure that you do not go off on a tangent to enjoy some appealing pleasure.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A conversation between your attachment and an outsider with your interests at heart can early bring fine results; later take extra care of health.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Rendering some special service to those who dwell beneath your

own roof opens their eyes to your fine qualities; but use much care on the highway.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Communications with long time playmate can bring some recreation that lifts spirit of you both; but steer clear of any big expenditures.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You need to be very muted today and tonight in going after the personal conditions you want; but at same time follow the suggestions of a money expert.

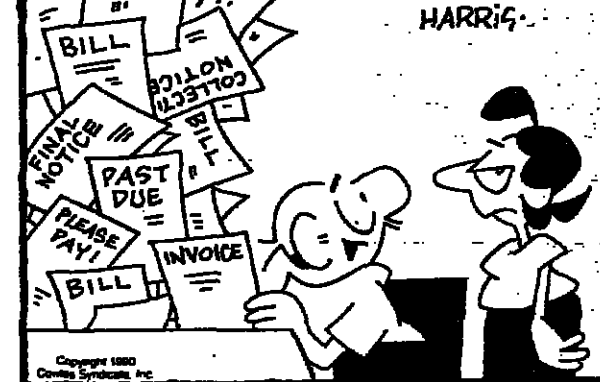
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Messages and calls to and from others can produce very satisfactory results for you and for them; but if your worry about another person you waste time.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Now you can discuss with experts in their fields how you can be less concerned with tradition and more successful in modern way of life.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You can well rely upon a staunch friend who is motivated to aid you from respect to gain intimate aims; but steer clear of a demanding associate.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Confidential talk with an executive how to bring your activities more in line with up to date methods, etc. is excellent but seek untried newcomer suggestions.

THE BETTER HALF



"I'm sure that caveman never patented the wheel — so I could reinvent it and get rich!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MOVEN
SEMYS
DREHWS
LOUTTE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: "MANLY BILGE FLAXEN CASKET"

Yesterday's Jumbles: MANLY BILGE FLAXEN CASKET
Answer: "Most people are put out when they're this — TAKEN IN"

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- From
- Image
- A Vaughan
- Draft status
- Line
- valley
- Make jubilee
- Folk singer
- Joan
- Song type
- Upper crust
- NL player
- Delicious saint
- Ford du
- VI
- TV alien
- Atot
- Conditional release
- Hera's
- husband
- Zeros
- Fills up
- AL players
- Gay
- Part of speech
- Cornic Johnson
- Cherry red
- Drop
- itch
- Nurse's forte
- Barnyard enclosure
- AL player
- Delicious saint
- Statutes
- pro quo
- inclines
- Diets
- Secondhand
- Rem of value
- Some votes
- Lab burner

DOWN

- Tosses
- Med. sch.
- subl.
- Stagger
- Toy
- Instrument
- Needy
- Operative
- feitor
- Cartel letters
- Of birth
- Pod
- went
- Drizzle
- boy!
- Cast
- Town on the
- Darube
- Hit hard
- Wetland
- Sierra
- Commotion
- Kind of room
- Ind. prince
- Eared seal
- P.J. gulf
- Krupp works
- Alto
- Artificial
- Most like a
- brat
- Relaxes a grip
- Shade tree
- Craggy hill
- Bobwhite
- Fit of anger
- Leg
- entangling weapon
- Choppers
- Meadows
- Actress Daily
- side
- 60 Elect
- Property claim
92. Norse epic

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS: 1. From, 2. Image, 3. A Vaughan, 4. Draft status, 5. Line, 6. valley, 7. Make jubilee, 8. Folk singer, 9. Joan, 10. Song type, 11. Upper crust, 12. NL player, 13. Delicious saint, 14. Ford du, 15. VI, 16. TV alien, 17. Atot, 18. Conditional release, 19. Hera's, 20. husband, 21. Zeros, 22. Fills up, 23. AL players, 24. Gay, 25. Part of speech, 26. Cornic Johnson, 27. Cherry red, 28. Drop, 29. itch, 30. Nurse's forte, 31. Barnyard enclosure, 32. AL player, 33. Delicious saint, 34. Statutes, 35. pro quo, 36. inclines, 37. Diets, 38. Secondhand, 39. Rem of value, 40. Some votes, 41. Lab burner.

DOWN: 1. Tosses, 2. Med. sch., 3. subl., 4. Stagger, 5. Toy, 6. Instrument, 7. Needy, 8. Operative, 9. feitor, 10. Cartel letters, 11. Of birth, 12. Pod, 13. went, 14. Drizzle, 15. boy!, 16. Cast, 17. Town on the, 18. Darube, 19. Hit hard, 20. Wetland, 21. Sierra, 22. Commotion, 23. Kind of room, 24. Ind. prince, 25. Eared seal, 26. P.J. gulf, 27. Krupp works, 28. Alto, 29. Artificial, 30. Most like a, 31. brat, 32. Relaxes a grip, 33. Shade tree, 34. Craggy hill, 35. Bobwhite, 36. Fit of anger, 37. Leg, 38. entangling weapon, 39. Choppers, 40. Meadows, 41. Actress Daily, 42. side, 43. 60 Elect, 44. Property claim, 45. Norse epic.

LA SEMAINE DE ...

Salim Swales

Criminalité: quel remède?

La criminalité est en hausse dans le pays, mais les statistiques sont rares. Le département de la Sécurité Générale n'a eu effet publié aucun chiffre depuis 3 ans. Or, cette institution est la seule source officielle d'information.

Sur quoi pouvons-nous alors nous appuyer pour constater la récente augmentation des crimes? Eh bien, nous nous fondons sur l'observation constante des "faits divers", rapportés ou non par la presse. Exemples: au début du mois de mai, un jeune homme a été embarqué hors de Ma'an par des inconnus qui l'ont tué après lui avoir arraché quelques milliers de dinars. Le 8 mai, à Marj al-Hammam dans la banlieue sud d'Amman, c'est un homme de 28 ans qui a été assassiné à coup de couteau par l'un des deux malfaiteurs qui voulaient cambrioler sa maison. Un drame familial s'est produit à Marja, où un homme a abattu sa femme, sa mère, son frère et son enfant. A Wadi Qnaib, ce sont trois adolescents qui ont été arrêtés au moment où ils volaient des voitures, pour les revendre ensuite en pièces détachées. A Amman, c'est tous les jours que l'on apprend d'horribles histoires.



Jusqu'en 1987, la direction des services de police a publié un rapport annuel chiffré sur la criminalité en Jordanie. On constatait déjà une progression quasi constante sur plusieurs années. En 1975, 3.598 crimes avaient été recensés. Un chiffre, qui avait presque doublé en 1980 (15.952). Alors qu'en 1985, on enregistrait une légère baisse (15.841), une nouvelle recrudescence devait marquer l'année 1987, au cours de laquelle 18.129 crimes ont été signalés. La non-publication des dernières statistiques n'est peut-être pas si étrange à cette évolution.

Entendons-nous: un homme ne nait pas criminel. S'il le devient, c'est souvent pour des raisons socio-économiques. La pauvreté, le chômage, les conditions de vie difficiles et l'injustice sociale figurent à n'en pas douter parmi les causes principales de la criminalité inquiétante d'aujourd'hui. Il faut y ajouter la faiblesse du système scolaire et de l'orientation sociale et culturelle, ainsi que l'influence manifestement négative des mass-media, en particulier de la télévision, du cinéma et de la vidéo. Il y a deux ans, un jeune assassin de 22 ans, condamné à mort, avait déclaré à son confrère "Al-Dustour" peu avant son exécution: "Si je n'avais pas regardé de films, je n'en serais jamais arrivé là. J'ai voulu mettre en pratique ce que je voyais".

Cela nous mène à réfléchir à un autre aspect du problème. Les crimes sont majoritairement l'œuvre de jeunes. Au-delà des considérations matérielles ou culturelles, il faut admettre que les jeunes sont en général abandonnés. Ils souffrent du vide, du manque de moyens de loisirs. Ils se retrouvent, de plus, en marge de la société, malgré leur nombre considérable. L'absence de perspective, leur manque de confiance dans l'avenir et leur impuissance devant les défis que la vie leur impose de relever poussent certains d'entre eux sur le chemin de la drogue, du crime et de la délinquance.

Jusqu'à présent, aucune politique, aucune série de mesures globales et cohérentes pour combattre la criminalité organisée ou la délinquance tout court n'ont été envisagées par les autorités. En mars 1988, le directeur de la police a certes formé une commission ad hoc dans ce sens. Depuis, cette dernière s'est réunie, se structurent en sous-commissions. Mais deux ans se sont écoulés sans qu'on n'ait rien entendu de leurs travaux.

Par définition, les services de police considèrent que leur tâche est de "découvrir" les crimes, d'en retrouver les auteurs, mais pas de les prévenir. Or, si ses responsables ont pu vouloir minimiser la délinquance dans le passé, sa recrudescence récente doit les amener à ne plus fermer les yeux.

Nous voudrions mettre en garde contre l'idée qui veut que l'utilisation de technologies sophistiquées puisse résoudre le problème de la criminalité. Il s'agit en effet avant tout d'un problème socio-économique, voire même politique. Si une société ne juge pas ses "grands" voleurs, est-il étonnant de voir ses multiplier les "petits"?

En transit entre ses voisins du nord et ceux du sud

La drogue fait aussi escale en Jordanie

Longtemps épargnée par la drogue, la Jordanie se trouve aujourd'hui confrontée à un trafic en forte hausse. Pays de transit entre les zones régionales de

production et de consommation, le royaume hachémite est aussi menacé par un marché local de stupéfiants.



Le service anti-narcotiques a saisi plus de 5 tonnes de haschisch et plus de 7 kilos d'héroïne l'an dernier en Jordanie.

Jusque dans les années 1930, la Jordanie pouvait se vanter d'être épargnée par le fléau de la drogue. L'émigration massive de ses ressortissants, ainsi sans doute que les vagues de réfugiés de 1948 et 1967, ont peu à peu changé la situation, en introduisant les narcotiques dans le pays. Une importation renforcée et diversifiée par l'ouverture du royaume sur l'Europe et le continent américain.

"L'histoire du fils, qui revient drogué au pays après quatre années de séjour aux Etats-Unis alors que ses parents croient qu'il a passé sa licence d'ingénieur, est l'histoire typique des patients que nous recevons", assure Walid Sarhan, psychiatre et responsable de la Société jordanienne pour la réhabilitation psychologique (SJRP). "J'ai notamment reçu un malade, poursuit-il, qui a dépensé toutes ses économies et l'argent que lui envoyaient ses parents dans l'achat de drogue. Il est revenu en Jordanie avec un savoir exhaustif des différents narcotiques à défaut de son diplôme. Tout a commencé, selon lui, par la curiosité."

Trois pour dix mille

En Jordanie, selon les statistiques du Département de la Sécurité Publique (PSD), le taux de drogués ne dépasse pas les trois pour dix mille. "Ce chiffre montre bien que nous sommes épargnés par le problème, commente Ghaleb Za'bi, chef du service anti-narcotiques du PSD. Les drogués, dans notre pays, sont soit des immigrants, soit des Jordaniens qui ont fait leurs études à l'étranger. Le royaume reste un point de transit pour les stupéfiants."

De fait, la Jordanie se trouve au beau milieu de l'axe de circulation de la drogue entre les pays producteurs (au nord, comme le Liban ou la Turquie) et les pays consommateurs (au sud, comme l'Iraq ou l'Arabie Saoudite). Passage obligé, le royaume hachémite s'est progressivement vu obligé de renforcer sa lutte anti-drogue devant l'augmentation du nombre de trafiquants, du volume de stupéfiants (voir encadré) et même du nombre de drogués jordaniens.

Cette croissance se traduit très nettement dans les statistiques du PSD. De 1980 à 1985, le nombre d'affaires de drogue, tous stupéfiants confondus (haschisch, héroïne, cocaïne et autres), est passé de 33 à 133. L'an dernier, ce chiffre était en légère baisse (115), et 50% des affaires impliquaient des ressortissants jordaniens. Le nombre de drogués recensés dans le pays a connu la même évolution, passant de 50 en 1980 à 114 en 1985, avant de redescendre à 56, selon les statistiques de l'année dernière.

Des chiffres restent loin de la réalité, reconnaît Sabri Rbeihat, l'un des patrons du PSD. Ils se limitent aux réseaux que nous avons réussi à démanteler et aux coups que nous avons pu empêcher. Ils ne rendent pas un compte exact, par exemple, du nombre de drogués en Jordanie.

En fait, nous n'avons qu'une idée approximative de la dimension de ce fléau, dont nous savons par contre que sa croissance est aujourd'hui favorisée par de nombreux facteurs.

A la curiosité, à l'envie d'essayer "une fois", s'ajoutent en effet bien d'autres motifs, que les spécialistes estiment tout aussi importants dans le cas jordanien. En tête de ces paramètres, figure la crise économique et sociale, soulignée déjà en 1987 une enquête de la Commission nationale sur la drogue (CND), présentée à l'université du Yarmouk. Une commission, qui réunit entre autres des représentants du PSD et des ministères de l'Education et de la Santé.

Les travaux de la CND ont ainsi révélé que les difficultés économiques et sociales sont prépondérantes chez 40% des drogués identifiés en Jordanie. Elles constituent la première cause de la prise de stupéfiants, devant la disponibilité des drogues (30% des cas), et la fréquentation de drogués (20%). Le rapport de la CND insistait particulièrement sur

l'accès relativement facile aux stupéfiants dans le pays et, à défaut, aux drogues substitutives, tel le valium.

La trentaine et mariés

"J'ai commencé à l'âge de 18 ans en Amérique, se souvient un ancien drogué jordanien, désintoxiqué depuis deux ans. J'ai essayé la cocaïne, l'héroïne, la morphine, la marijuana, le haschisch. Par curiosité, parce que tout le monde en prenait autour de moi. De retour à Amman, le jeune "accroc" s'est retrouvé en manque. "Ne trouvant aucune de ces drogues, je n'ai pas eu d'autre choix que le valium. J'en prenais des dizaines de comprimés par jour, que me fournissait quelqu'un qui travaillait avec moi. J'étais moi-même étonné de la facilité avec laquelle il se les procurait. Un autre ancien drogué, qui a étudié en Angleterre, assure que ce sont s'ennui, le temps libre ainsi que la liberté

Le trafic de stupéfiants en chiffres

L'escalade

Le service anti-narcotiques a mené deux opérations coup de poing vendredi, qui ont abouti à la saisie de 690 kg de haschisch, d'une valeur de 700.000 dinars. 350 kg ont été découverts sur un bateau égyptien, arraisonné par des vedettes de la police dans le Golfe d'Aqaba. Une dizaine de personnes ont par ailleurs été arrêtées le même jour dans le nord-est du pays, où 340 kg de haschisch libanais ont été trouvés dissimulés dans des camions. Un policier a été légèrement blessé au cours de l'intervention, épanouie par un hélicoptère.

Ces deux nouvelles affaires illustrent l'importance du trafic de cette "drogue douce" dans le royaume. Une drogue, qui arrivait en tête des saisies policières en 1989, avec un peu plus de 5.338 tonnes détruites. Elles témoignent aussi de l'escalade

calade du trafic de drogue dans le royaume. En 1980, ce chiffre dépassait à peine les 443 kg. L'héroïne arrivait en deuxième position avec un total de 7,026 kg découverts l'an dernier, contre seulement 200 g en 1981.

Le nombre de personnes arrêtées pour trafic de drogue a suivi la même évolution au cours des neuf dernières années, passant de 97 en 1980 à 345 en 1989. Parmi elles, figurent respectivement 57 et 152 Jordaniens. Les autres étant très majoritairement des ressortissants d'autres pays arabes de la région.

389 personnes purgent à l'heure actuelle des peines de prison pour trafic ou usage de stupéfiants en Jordanie. La plupart d'entre eux (255) sont internés à la centrale de Sawwaqa, à 65 km au sud d'Amman.

Saada Kilani

EN BREF

Visite. Le premier ministre pakistanais, Benazir Bhutto, a achevé hier une visite officielle de deux jours en Jordanie. Mme Bhutto, qui a entamé mardi à Téhéran une tournée dans sept pays islamiques, s'est entretenue vendredi à Amman avec le roi Hussein et le premier ministre jordanien Mondar Badrané. Le premier ministre pakistanais a entrepris ce périple afin de sensibiliser ces pays au problème du Cachemire, objet de litige entre Islamabad et New Delhi. Benazir Bhutto est aujourd'hui au Nord-Yémen, avant de se rendre, en début de semaine, en Tunisie.

Islamistes. Le bloc des députés islamistes, qui totalise le tiers des 80 sièges de la Chambre basse, a lancé cette semaine une campagne en faveur de la conformation du pouvoir judiciaire jordanien à la loi coranique. Hamam Said, député de la coalition des Frères musulmans, a indiqué jeudi que la législation actuelle, qui fait notamment la distinction entre entre tribunaux civils et religieux, peut être amendée au nom de l'article 2 de la Constitution selon lequel "l'Islam est la religion de l'Etat". Selon lui, un tel amendement constituerait un "pas essentiel" dans la voie de l'application par étapes de la loi islamique [Sharia] dans le pays. Il a souligné l'importance aux yeux de son mouvement de faire évoluer "progressivement" la Jordanie dans cette direction "à travers l'éducation, la persuasion et la modification de la conduite des gens".

Amnesty. Une réunion visant à créer en Jordanie une section d'Amnesty International s'est tenue à Amman au début du mois, en présence de 140 participants dont deux membres du secrétariat central de l'organisation internationale des droits de l'Homme. Un comité préparatoire a été chargé de mener à bien création dans les six mois à venir. Le gouvernement jordanien avait donné son feu vert à une telle initiative en février dernier, à l'occasion de la visite à Amman du secrétaire général d'Amesty.

Sommet arabe. Le secrétaire de la Ligue arabe, Cheddi Klibi, est attendu aujourd'hui à Bagdad pour préparer la réunion des ministres des Affaires étrangères des "Vingt-deux" prévue les 22 et 23 mai. Cette réunion doit fixer l'ordre du jour du sommet arabe extraordinaire demandé par l'OLP pour examiner «les dangers de l'immigration des juifs soviétiques en Palestine et les menaces israéliennes contre l'Irak et la nation arabe». Le président Saddam Hussein a invité tous les chefs d'Etat de la Ligue à se rendre à Bagdad le 28 mai, à l'exception des président syrien et libanais, qui refusent toujours le lieu choisi pour la rencontre.

Rebelote. La direction du Likoud (droite nationaliste) a entamé vendredi à Jérusalem une nouvelle série de négociations en vue de former un nouveau gouvernement israélien sous la houlette d'Yitzhak Shamir. Le numéro un du Likoud s'est en effet vu accordé jeudi un deuxième mandat de trois semaines par le président Herzog afin de mettre sur pied un nouveau cabinet. M. Shamir a promis un gouvernement qui proclamera «le droit inaliénable du peuple juif sur Eretz Israël», autrement dit sur l'Etat hébreu actuel et les territoires occupés, au minimum.

Commando. La police israélienne a annoncé vendredi la constitution d'une unité spéciale de 30 hommes, baptisée "Geddon", pour lutter contre l'Intifada à Jérusalem-Est. Opérant en civil, ce commando sera doté de voitures immatriculées dans les territoires occupés avec mission de renseignement et d'intervention ponctuelle. Cette mesure a aussitôt été dénoncée par Bassam Abou Charif, conseiller de Yasser Arafat, qui a appelé l'administration et le Congrès américains à "prendre des mesures concrètes" pour sauvegarder les droits de l'Homme. Par ailleurs, deux policiers israéliens ont été arrêtés jeudi et accusés de rançonner les Palestiniens des territoires occupés. Les deux hommes profitaient en effet de "contrôles de routine" pour systématiquement "confisquer" l'argent des passagers arabes palestiniens.

Union. Les gouvernements de Bonn et de Berlin-Est ont approuvé vendredi matin le traité inter-allemand instaurant l'union économique, sociale et monétaire de la RFA et de la RDA. Le document a ensuite été signé par les ministres des Finances de deux pays, en présence du chancelier ouest-allemand Helmut Kohl et du premier ministre est-allemand Lothar de Maizière. La veille, un hebdomadaire de RFA avait publié un sondage, indiquant que la moitié des habitants de RDA était hostile à une unification rapide et souhaitait qu'elle n'intervienne que dans deux ou trois ans.

Observateurs. Huit parlementaires de six pays membres du Conseil de l'Europe (23 nations) assisteront aujourd'hui en qualité d'observateurs aux élections législatives et présidentielle, qui se déroulent aujourd'hui dans le pays. A son arrivée jeudi à Bucarest, la délégation a reçu l'assurance d'une totale liberté de mouvement de la part du gouvernement roumain.

Essais publics. Le président François Mitterrand a laissé entendre jeudi à Papete (Tahiti) que la France rendrait désormais publiques ses tirs nucléaires sur l'atoll de Mururoa dans le Pacifique Sud. Jusqu'alors, Paris se refusait systématiquement à confirmer ou démentir l'annonce de ses essais nucléaires par la Nouvelle-Zélande.

TGV. Une rame du Train à Grande Vitesse (TGV) Atlantique a établi vendredi dans l'ouest de la France un nouveau record de vitesse sur rail, à 515,3 km/h. Le précédent record avait été enregistré le 16 mai sur le même tronçon ferroviaire avec un compteur bloqué à 510,8 km/h.

Décès. Sammy Davis Junior est mort mercredi à Los Angeles d'un cancer de la gorge, à l'âge de 64 ans. Danseur, imitateur, chanteur "crooner" et acteur, l'artiste noir avait réussi à tenir le haut de l'affiche du show business aux Etats-Unis depuis les années 1950. Il s'était même lancé dans la comédie musicale à Broadway avec "Mr Wonderful" (1956). Sammy Davis Junior a tourné une vingtaine de films, dont "Porgy and Bess" (1959) et "Sweet Charity" (1969).

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

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"Save the Children"

Défendre les enfants palestiniens

L'association "Save the Children" a appelé jeudi à prendre la défense des enfants palestiniens, victimes de la répression israélienne dans les territoires occupés. «Il est urgent que la communauté internationale prenne en charge [leur] protection, puisque les autorités israéliennes n'assurent pas leur sauvegarde et que les familles ont de plus en plus de difficultés à le faire», estime dans un rapport de 1.000 pages la responsable d'un projet de recherche, Anne Elizabeth Nixon.

Selon l'enquête, menée par 20 personnes et financée par les associations "Save the Children" de Suède et des Etats-Unis, 159 Palestiniens de moins de 16 ans ont été abattus par l'armée ou des colons israéliens au cours des deux premières années de l'Intifada. Les chercheurs estiment par ailleurs à quelque 50.000 le nombre de jeunes blessés ou soignés lors d'affrontement avec l'armée d'occupation. 22% d'entre eux ont été touchés par des balles réelles. (D'après agences.)

Selon l'Organisation mondiale de la santé

Le tabac est de plus en plus meurtrier

Responsable d'un tiers des cancers, le tabac provoque chaque année la mort prématurée de près de 3 millions de personnes dans le monde. Un nombre, qui risque de tripler dans les 30 prochaines années, si rien n'est fait pour enrayer ce fléau, prévient l'OMS.

Le diagnostic de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé est pessimiste: le tabagisme, qui récemment encore concernait avant tout les hommes, touche désormais aussi bien les hommes que les femmes. Dans les pays industrialisés, 30% des hommes et des femmes fument. Dans le tiers monde, les proportions sont tout autres: le tabagisme concerne 50% des hommes et seulement 5% des femmes. Mais ces tendances se modifient et les femmes fument de plus en plus, souligne le docteur Claire Chollat Traquet, chargée de recherche dans le cadre du programme de lutte de l'OMS contre la cigarette.

De fait, au cours des 20 dernières années, la mortalité féminine due au cancer du poulmon (dont 90% des cas ont le tabagisme pour origine) a plus que doublé au Japon, en Norvège, en Pologne, en Grande-Bretagne, en Suède. Il a triplé au cours de la même période aux Etats-Unis et au Canada.

Dans les pays riches, d'importantes campagnes anti-tabac se mettent en place depuis quelques années. Elles entraînent, note l'OMS, plus de succès auprès des hommes qu'auprès des femmes. Les producteurs de cigarettes, qui se rendent compte de cette évolution, font désormais de ces dernières leur cible publicitaire privilégiée. Ils ont aussi accru leur effort commercial en direction des pays pauvres pour augmenter leurs ventes.

Cette situation se révèle

d'autant plus préoccupante, que la femme est beaucoup plus vulnérable que l'homme aux effets nocifs du tabac et que, dans un grand nombre de pays tant riches que sous-développés, les jeunes filles fument d'ores et déjà plus que les garçons.

Le tabagisme, ajoute l'OMS, affecte plus durablement les femmes en provoquant chez elles, outre les cancers du poulmon et du larynx, de nombreux cancers du col de l'utérus. L'utilisation de la pilule contraceptive, doublée de la cigarette, aggrave en outre les maladies cardio-vasculaires. Enfin, le tabagisme a des effets dramatiques sur la fertilité féminine.

On sait parfaitement aujourd'hui que les nouveaux nés de femmes fumeuses ont un poids insuffisant. Les bronchites et les maladies respiratoires affectent particulièrement les enfants de moins d'un an lorsque l'un des parents fume.

lars et les firmes de cigarettes n'hésitent pas à dépenser chaque année 2,5 milliards de dollars pour conquérir de nouvelles clientèles. Ces dernières estiment que pour "survivre", il leur faut 2,5 millions de nouveaux fumeurs par an, soit peu ou prou, le nombre de morts que provoque la cigarette dans une même période.

Les mesures que préconise l'OMS consistent notamment dans la prohibition de toute forme de publicité et de promotion du tabac, y compris les opérations de "parrainage" des manifestations sportives. Or ce dernier point remet en cause des intérêts financiers énormes. L'interdiction de fumer dans les lieux publics semble, elle, plus aisée à mettre en place et certains pays se sont déjà engagés dans cette voie.

L'OMS souligne par ailleurs que l'arme du prix peut être utilisée. Des études ont récemment montré aux Etats-Unis, que lorsque le prix du paquet de cigarettes augmente de 1%, la consommation diminue de 0,4% chez les adultes et de plus de 1% parmi les adolescents.

Les recommandations de l'OMS ne sont évidemment pas du goût des producteurs de tabac. Ils prétendent notamment qu'une "régulation précoce" aurait un "impact dévastateur" sur les économies des pays en voie de développement.

Quelque 33 millions d'hommes et de femmes se consacrent dans le monde à la culture du tabac, dont 90% d'entre eux dans le tiers monde. Avec leurs familles, ce sont au moins 100 millions de personnes dont la vie dépend de cette culture selon l'Association internationale des producteurs de tabac (ITGA). (D'après agences.)

IMA
Edgar Pisani
de passage
à Amman

Le président de l'Institut du Monde Arabe à Paris (IMA) a effectué au début de semaine une visite de deux jours en Jordanie, dernière étape d'un périple qui l'a mené dans 15 pays arabes. Ce voyage, destiné à étudier avec chaque gouvernement les futurs projets de collaboration culturelle avec l'IMA, s'est traduit lundi à Amman par un accord verbal, qui reste à concrétiser, entre Paris et la galerie nationale pour la présentation à l'Institut de tableaux du musée jordanien.

Edgar Pisani, qui devait inaugurer le lendemain à l'IMA le premier Salon euro-arabe du Livre, a souhaité avant son départ de Jordanie, que cette manifestation "permette de débattre de la crise de l'édition du livre dans le monde arabe". Une centaine d'éditeurs de près de 17 pays arabes et européens ont participé à ce Salon qui doit fermer ses portes ce dimanche soir.

Un Salon, qui avait débuté dans une légère confusion après la réclamation, par le ministre français de l'Intérieur, de certains ouvrages parmi les quelque 15 tonnes contrôlées par la police des frontières.

Il ne s'agit pas de censure, a indiqué le gouvernement français, mais de la simple application de la loi qui interdit la mise en cause grave d'une communauté ethnique ou religieuse ou d'ouvrages proposant des moyens de fabrication d'armements.

A L'AFFICHE

Cinéma

"Mort d'un Commis Voyageur"

Le centre culturel américain présente cette semaine et jusqu'à la fin du mois le puissant drame d'Arthur Miller, dans la version télévisuelle de Volker Schlöndorff (1985).

L'histoire de ce classique du théâtre américain est assez simple: à 60 ans, dont 40 de travail, le commis voyageur Willy Loman (Dustin Hoffman) estime que sa vie est un échec. Les valeurs sociales (succès en affaires), qu'il considérait comme un absolu, se révèlent fausses. Il constate qu'il s'est bercé d'illusions sa vie entière. Epuisé, brisé nerveusement, il se suicide.

"Death of a Salesman" (Mort d'un Commis Voyageur) reçut le prix Pulitzer en 1949. Miller voulait donner au public l'occasion de se pencher sur un personnage typique de la société américaine, même au travers d'un personnage plutôt raté. L'auteur avait intitulé la première version de sa pièce "The Inside of his Head" (L'Intérieur de sa tête). La première image qui inspira Miller (Préface, Recueils, 1957) fut celle d'une énorme tête dressée sur l'avant-scène. Le rideau devait se lever et dévoiler ce crâne, qui s'ouvrait pour livrer les pensées intimes du personnage.

Les Américains avaient de quoi s'identifier à Willy Loman, un homme moyen, trahi

par des rêves nourris d'un mythe de la société américaine: celui de la réussite offerte à quiconque se montre assidu et tenace. Miller ironise sur la "réussite" de son personnage, en tant que marchand qui perpétue le mythe. Sa tragédie vient de ce que son succès ne se mesure qu'à l'aune de faits matériels.

Loman s'y consacre avec une telle obsession, qu'il reste hermétique aux autres dimensions de la vie, notamment à l'amour de sa femme. Ses fils finissent par le mépriser et jamais il ne prend conscience de l'importance de sa femme. Quand il découvre enfin l'amour qu'il porte à ses enfants, sentiment qui ne lui "côtoit" rien et l'aurait rendu heureux, il est déjà trop tard. Il ne sait les dédommager que matériellement, seul moyen d'expression qu'il connait: ainsi se suicide-t-il, pour qu'ils héritent 20.000 dollars, soit le montant de son assurance-vie.

"Death of a Salesman" est la première pièce à introduire le surréalisme dans le théâtre américain. L'action se déroule dans deux dimensions temporelles simultanées: au présent, autrement dit aux deux derniers jours de sa vie, que Willy Loman passe avec sa famille, se mêle une projection fragmentaire des espoirs du

père, de ses inquiétudes et de son sentiment d'avoir été dupe.

Le cinéma, où temps et espace fusionnent assez facilement, a-t-il su servir le chef-d'œuvre d'Arthur Miller? De la version cinématographique qu'en a donné Lazzlo Benedek en 1951, l'auteur lui-même dit qu'elle n'est pas réussie parce que dans les jeux de temps le décor demeure trop réaliste, gommant les angoisses du personnage. Schlöndorff, lui, s'est inspiré directement du théâtre pour son téléfilm, offrant une interprétation très fidèle à la construction dramatique de la pièce. Le cinéaste allemand a notamment commandé à son décorateur (John Kassas) une atmosphère délibérément théâtrale, qui contraste avec l'ambiance du "premier-plan", autrement dit la demeure de la famille. Le dynamisme des mouvements de caméra et le montage parviennent à nous donner l'impression de nous faufiler dans les pensées intimes de Loman.

Enfin, l'interprétation est impeccable. Dustin Hoffman (qui succède à Frederic March, interprète du film de 1951) est précis, efficace, dans la peau d'un Willy Loman totalement assumé.

Sami Kassar.

TELEVISION

DIMANCHE

17h50 - Tel Père, Tel Fils: sitcom à la française, avec Jacques Balutin.
18h15 - L'Ecole des Fans, animée par Jacques Martin.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Sélection de variétés françaises.

LUNDI

18h00 - Les Montagnes Roumaines: documentaire.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Magazine sportif hebdomadaire.

MARDI

18h00 - "Co que Tout Bon Chien devrait Savoir": programme pour les jeunes.
18h10 - Des Chiffres et des Lettres: jeu.
18h30 - L'Appart, sitcom à la française, avec Roger Pierre.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Aujourd'hui en Jordanie: magazine local réalisé et présenté par Saleh Madi.

MERCREDI

18h00 - "Panique aux Caraïbes": série policière.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Mémoires: documentaire sur la division des cellules vivantes.

JEUDI

17h45 - "Molierissimo" (4): dessin animé pour les jeunes. 20 ans d'histoire de France, vu par un enfant de 10 ans, en compagnie du dramaturge Molière.
18h10 - Des Chiffres et des Lettres: jeu.
18h30 - La Chanson aux Chansons: émission de variétés françaises du passé, présentée par Pascal Sevran.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Sélection de variétés françaises.

VENREDI

17h30 - "Le Magnifique", de Philippe de Broca, avec Jean-Paul Belmondo, Jacqueline Bisset et Jean Lefebvre. Aventure et espionnage au Mexique, à la suite de l'assassinat d'un agent du FBI.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Portraits, ou métiers de femmes. Cette semaine: la cuisinière.

SAMEDI

17h45 - Champs-Élysées: émission de variétés présentée par Michel Drucker.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Aujourd'hui en France: documentaire.

PASSEZ-MOI MON FRANCAIS

La rubrique de Flavia Romero

Pourquoi?

Vale Egeria!

En quittant Azraq, on peut retourner à Amman par la route qui passe par Qasr el-Amra et Qasr el-Harraneh. Le premier est un petit bain d'époque omeyyade, qui est fameux pour ses fresques. En venant du nord, on tombe dessus à l'improviste et, en général, il faut faire un peu de marche arrière pour retrouver le passage d'entrée. Il est tapissé dans une vallée de térahintes centenaires, liés à une légende ésothérique: on s'arrache un cheveu et on l'enroule autour d'une branche, tout en faisant un vœu. Celui-ci s'avérera, insha'allah, c'est à dire s'il est dans les desseins du Très Haut qu'il s'avère. Les Bédouins y font des pèlerinages pour poser sur les arbres mêmes des pierres, ce qui les guérirait de tous les maux congénitaux du cerveau.

Qasr el-Harraneh, par contre, a été construit pour dominer le territoire tout autour. Ses proportions sont magnifiquement équilibrées et il est bien assis sur sa colline. Malheureusement, les deux châteaux ont été très maltraités. La route passe à quelques dizaines de mètres des deux constructions et le trafic lourd qui y transite sans arrêt risque, par les vibrations qu'il provoque, de fissurer leurs murs (ceci est vrai surtout pour Amra).

Dans les deux enceintes, il a été construit une maisonnette pour le gardien et des sanitaires. Découvrir ce qu'est l'une ou l'autre n'est pas évident. Les toilettes pourraient être une idée très civilisée, si on engageait aussi quelqu'un à titre permanent pour les maintenir dans un état de propreté impeccable. Quant aux gardiens, dans le temps ils vivaient sous la tente à l'entrée des châteaux. Au lieu de leur construire une maisonnette, ne pouvait-on pas leur donner les moyens de se faire une belle tente pour le plaisir des yeux? Des pylônes d'au moins trente mètres de hauteur, où passe une ligne à haute tension, dominant comme des totems menaçant Qasr el-Harraneh. Le transformateur est tout près. Pourquoi?

Pour agrémenter le tout, des arbres ont été plantés tout autour des enceintes. Si la chose peut être intelligente pour Amra, où ils serviront à cacher les deux constructions dont on parlait, elle est inacceptable pour Harraneh, où les arbres n'ont rien à faire. Harraneh a été érigé pour surveiller le territoire qui l'entoure et qui doit rester vide. Les arbres empêcheraient aussi de voir le château de loin, dans toute la beauté de ses lignes. Pourquoi ne le transformerait-on pas en musée du territoire (silex, fossiles, flore, faune, histoire des Beni Sakher avec toutes les légendes, les chansons, la poésie et les traditions de ces tribus, qui vivent sur ce territoire)?

J'ai essayé de parler à plusieurs personnes de tout cela, mais toutes se rejettent la faute. Je voudrais payer aux responsables un voyage à Agrigento (Italie), pour qu'ils apprennent ce qu'il ne faut absolument pas faire dans un site archéologique et touristique. Malgré la magnifique vallée des temples, Agrigento réussit à être une monstruosité. Veut-on ici faire la même chose? Pourquoi l'expérience d'autre pays ne pourrait-elle pas nous servir?

Une fois que j'ai exprimé mon admiration pour la "tente en laine noire", un fonctionnaire de l'Etat a levé son pied chaussé de mocassins Gucci et m'a prié de remarquer qu'il n'était pas Bédouin. Eh bien, cher monsieur, notre pays est fait en partie par la civilisation bédouine, qui est très vieille et intéressante. La tente est une œuvre d'art, un chef-d'œuvre d'architecture, tandis que les constructions faites n'importe comment, sans goût et sans élégance, ne le sont pas.

Essayons de faire un effort pour préserver dans le pays ce qu'il y a de beau, de vrai et de valable! La Jordanie a des architectes très capables et sensibles. Pourquoi ne pas demander leur avis quand il s'agit de construire autour des sites aussi importants qu'Azraq, Amra, Harraneh? Le désert est une très grande attraction touristique. Pensons-y.

Laila Rashad Shawa à la galerie nationale

Une peinture sociale

Peintre palestinienne, aujourd'hui installée en Grande-Bretagne, Laila Rashad Shawa expose pour la première fois ses toiles en Jordanie (*). Sa peinture mêle tradition artistique musulmane à la vie d'aujourd'hui.

Comprendre l'œuvre de Laila R. Shawa nécessite un retour à l'histoire de l'art musulman, dont la "Grammaire des Styles" de Flammarion nous rappelle qu'il "n'est point un art spontané, mais le produit d'une fusion entre l'art oriental et l'art des pays conquis". L'artiste palestinienne nous présente en effet à la galerie nationale une peinture, qui a subi l'influence de différentes écoles, anciennes et modernes. Un mélange, qui reflète la situation sociale, culturelle et artistique du monde arabe contemporain.

Le tableau, chez Laila, comprend toujours deux plans. En toile de fond, l'artiste place des éléments empruntés aux différentes écoles de l'art musulman: écoles persane, ottomane, indienne, syrienne... Au premier plan, on découvre des formes, marquées par les écoles contemporaines: fauvisme, impressionnisme... On remarque aussi l'influence de Gauguin, Rousseau ou encore Klee sur l'artiste.

Georges Sadoul, dans son "Histoire du Cinéma" estime que "l'une des raisons pour lesquelles la civilisation musulmane n'a pas pu durer est que la femme n'a pas eu un rôle actif dans la société". Laila R. Shawa le pense manifestement aussi, en nous présentant des femmes confinées dans le rôle d'objets de désir, tout en nous précisant que cette réalité appartient au passé. Son œuvre attire le visiteur par l'humour, et l'ironie, qui se dégagent en particulier des aplats très fauves. Le style naïf correspond à cette conception de la peinture orientale, qui donne libre cours à l'effacement entre ces aplats et les éléments décoratifs.

Sabbah al-Hadidi.

(*) Voir "A l'affiche".

Théâtre au RCC

"Tranches de Vies"



Le centre culturel français (CCF) propose cette semaine au centre culturel royal deux représentations de "Tranches de Vies", une spectacle composite, mis en scène par Olivier Roche, animateur au CCF. (*)

Il s'agit d'une succession de six sketches, dont trois tirés des "Diaboliques" de Roland Dubillard, deux autres d'œuvres de Ribes et Dimey et d'une création, précise ce dernier, en ajoutant que la pièce se rattache «davantage au café-théâtre qu'au théâtre proprement dit». «Ce sont des scénettes, qui racontent des épisodes de la vie courante, qui dépeignent avec un humour tantôt grinçant, tantôt bienveillant, le Français, le "Franchouillard", poursuit-il.

Monologues ou dialogues, les sketches ne font intervenir jamais plus de deux personnages. Des personnages, interprétés par cinq comédiens, dont deux jordanien (A. Kayyali et I. Nammari) et un Syrien (S. Chaaban). Ils sont épaulés par P. Bec, enseignant au CCF, et par le metteur en scène.

EXPOSITIONS

Signes d'Étoffes. Kilims, broderies, talismans... Les pièces exposées font partie de la vie quotidienne des paysans et bédouins de Syrie. S'y ajoutent les créations du plasticien Moustafa Fathi. Centre culturel français, du 21 au 31 mai. Vernissage, lundi à 18h00. Entrée libre. Tél. 624445.

Peinture. Les quatre peintres jordanien Adnan Yihya, Ghada Dahdaleh, Mohammad Samara, Rula Al-Shukri, et la sculpteur Larisa Najjar, exposent leurs toutes dernières œuvres. Centre des expositions de la Fédération Stéphanie (Shmoukhal), jusqu'au 7 juin. Ouvert tous les jours, sauf les vendredis. Entrée libre.

Peinture. Scènes de la vie sociale, sur fond d'art musulman par l'artiste palestinienne Laila Rashad Shawa. Galerie Nationale (Djebel al-Weldah) jusqu'au mercredi 30 mai.

Peinture. Artiste libanaise, Randa Berouti expose une série de toiles consacrées à la vie quotidienne en Palestine, au Liban et en Jordanie. Institut Goethe, jusqu'au 29 mai. Entrée libre.

THEATRE

"Tranches de Vies", avec P. Bec, S. Chaaban, A. Kayyali, I. Nammari et O. Roche. Six sketches comiques sur la vie quotidienne, d'après notamment les "Diaboliques" de Roland Dubillard, mis en scène par Olivier Roche. Centre culturel royal, mercredi 23 et samedi 26 mai à 20h15 (en français).

J E U X

Mots croisés

par Florence Montiel

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										

Horizontalement

1: revêt après avoir oublié. 2: petit âne; coordonne. 3: contenant; bruit sec. 4: médecine. 5: il y fait plus frais qu'au soleil; mors. 6: redémarrer. 7: assommes. 8: proposition; pas cult. 9: reprises; habitudes. 10: démonstratif; revient chaque année.

Verticalement

A: ramènera. B: gigantesque; exclamation enfantine. C: qui peut être doté; arrêter phonétique. D: préposition; morceau. E: résister. F: pronom; valeur. G: villes; pronom. H: ils étaient 40 contre Ali Baba. I: sur la paille; touche. J: pièce étanche; nazi.

(Solution la semaine prochaine)

Solution de la grille N. 10:

Horizontalement

1: Révolution. 2: Été. 3: phrygien. 4: il, eux. 5: bénéfices. 6: lentes; tut. 7: Ré; 8: Abel. 9: ut. 10: eu;

Verticalement

A: République. B: ée; tu. C: Varennes. D: et; Oe. E: légifère. F: utilisé; J: C: toc. H: nuit; bat. I:

CINEMA

"Death of a Salesman", de Volker Schlöndorff, d'après l'œuvre d'Arthur Miller, avec Dustin Hoffman, Charles Durning et Kate Reid. Illusions perdues et suicide d'un commis voyageur.

Centre culturelle, dimanche 20 et jeudi 24 mai à 19h00 (en anglais).

Ciné-club. Séance quotidienne à 20h00. Projection pour les jeunes, le jeudi à 16h00. Le programme de la semaine du dimanche 20 au samedi 26 mai n'a pas été communiqué. Renseignements au 603901.

Films en version originale. Route de Pusturilat, première à droite après l'hôtel Jérusalem puis première à gauche.

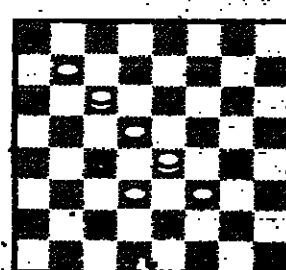
LE SAVIEZ-VOUS ?

CARIE. Le premier «vaccin» enrayant la formation de la carie dentaire pourrait être opérationnel «dans quelques années», selon le Dr Jean-Paul Klein, responsable de l'équipe de l'Institut public français de recherche médicale (INSERM) qui travaille depuis une quinzaine d'années à sa réalisation. Ce vaccin, qui sera administré par voie buccale, semble en effet parvenir à son dernier stade expérimental. Il sécrète dans la salive des anticorps empêchant les bactéries d'adhérer à la dent et d'attaquer sa protection d'émail. Un tel produit pourrait permettre de réduire de moitié l'ensemble des soins dentaires prodigués dans le monde.

HALEINE. Le piège à rat idéal doit sentir... l'haléine de rat, selon un chercheur australien, qui vient d'isoler deux substances spécifiques de cette haleine et qui compte mettre au point des pièges reproduisant cette odeur. Selon lui, les rats ont un faible pour la nourriture déjà mordue par leurs congénères. «D'où l'hypothèse selon laquelle ces rongeurs secrètent quelque chose sur ce qu'ils mangent, pour informer les autres qu'il n'y a aucun danger», estime le scientifique australien, dont les expériences s'avèrent «satisfaisantes».

DAMES

Problème N. 11.



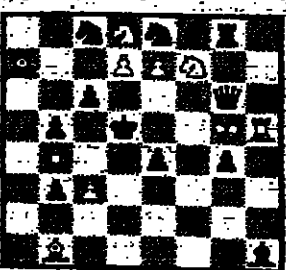
Les blancs gagnent en trois coups.

Solution du problème N. 10:

B. 4-7; N. 12-26; B. 23-20; N.

ECHECS

Problème N. 11.



Mit avec les blancs en deux coups.

Solution du problème N. 10:

B. 4-7; N. 12-26; B. 23-20; N.

AMMAN LITTLE LEAGUE

Results of baseball games played on May 15 and 18.

T-BALL DIVISION:

Acacia Shipping Co. vs. Data Mini
Nashwanah/Chalabi vs. Jalkhal Library

COACH-PITCH DIVISION:

Tuesday May 15:

Araxex 20 AICI 14

Friday May 18:

Intercontinental 23 Concom 17
Phelli 20 Arab Finance Corp. 18
National Steel Ind. 17 Araxex 6
Epson 20 AICI 6

KID-PITCH DIVISION:

Tuesday, May 15:

NECC 14 Westinghouse 8
Danish Dairy 9 Marriott 8

Friday, May 18:

NECC 13 Mr. Chips 4
Danish Dairy 10 Jordan Worsteds Mills 4
Westinghouse 13 Marriott 12

SOFTBALL DIVISION:

Volvo 3 Second Time Around 2
Qaddoumi Agri. 12 NADAS 6

Tim Miller and Andy Kerr (in hat), coaches of two Coach-Pitch Division teams (Intercontinental and Epson) in a tight race for first place.

BASEBALL STANDINGS

COACH-PITCH DIVISION:

	WON	LOST
NSI	5	1
Intercon	4	1
Epson	4	1
Araxex	4	2
AICI	2	4
Pirelli	2	4
Concom	1	5
AFC	1	5

KID-PITCH DIVISION:

NECC	8	0
Danish Dairy	6	2
J.W.M.	3	5
Westinghouse	3	5
Mr. Chips	2	6
Marriott	2	6

SOFTBALL DIVISION:

Qaddoumi	4	2
STA	3	3
NADAS	3	3
Volvo	2	4

Graf downs Zvereva

WEST BERLIN (AP) — Steffi Graf eased into her 12th straight final when she defeated Soviet Natalia Zvereva 6-4, 6-2 Saturday in the semifinals of the German Open.

Graf, who lost at the French Open almost a year ago, found Zvereva a determined opponent but did not have to hit her best form to advance.

Top-seeded Graf Sunday will play the winner of the semifinal between second seed Monica Seles of Yugoslavia and Sandra Cecchini, the 16th seed from Italy.

Graf started slowly, losing her serve to trail 1-2 in the first set, but broke back immediately in the fourth game when Zvereva served a double fault on break point.

The early games produced the best tennis as Zvereva kept Graf on the move by mixing up the pace and direction of her shots. But the 19-year-old Soviet couldn't keep it up.

After breaking serve to level at 2-2 in the first set Graf was never behind again.

Her most anxious moment after the early stages came when she served for the first set at 5-3. She double-faulted on the first point and then missed on three routine shots to lose the game.

But Graf came back to break Zvereva's serve in the 10th game to close out the first set in 38 minutes.

Graf again lost her serve at the start of the second set but it was only a minor pause. Zvereva couldn't stop the tide turning in the West German's favour and lost her serve to Graf who took the lead 4-2 after the Soviet held six games points.

Graf won that sixth game on her first break point when Zvereva struck a forehand over the baseline. From there on she swept easily to victory. Graf wasn't really worried.

Chesnokov beats Mancini

ROME (R) — Andrei Chesnokov, saying a few bears and loss of sleep had improved his game, beat holder Alberto Mancini to reach the semifinals of the Italian Open tennis championship Saturday.

Chesnokov, the Monte Carlo Open champion, won 7-6, 6-0, clinching an electric opening set lasting one hour 20 minutes that had an enthusiastic Roman crowd on the edge of their seats. Chesnokov took the first set tie-break 7-3.

In Sunday's semifinals, Chesnokov meets fourth-seeded Spaniard Emilio Sanchez Vicario, losing finalist in 1986, who beat Mancini's Argentine compatriot Guillermo Perez Roldan 7-6, 6-2.

"I went out last night, went to bed late and slept till 11," the Soviet eighth seed said.

"I never drink beer during a tournament, you know. But yesterday I was so tired I drank

some beer," he added with a laugh.

The other semifinal pits twice champion Andrei Chesnokov of Ecuador, the third seed, against 10th-seeded Thomas Muster of Austria.

Gomez played graceful tennis to beat Italian Omar Camporese 6-1, 6-2, while Muster powered his way to a 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 victory over Frenchman Guy Forget.

Gomez beat Muster when they met in the U.S. Open in 1987.

Chesnokov had been unhappy with his performance Friday when he beat American Jim Courier in three sets after dropping the first.

He said he did not practise in the morning and added, laughing, that he went back to bed in the afternoon and slept another two hours.

"Usually, every night I eat and then I go to sleep. I need some changes in my life, you know," he

said. "I'm happy about my game today. If I'm going to play the French Open like today, that's okay."

Dropping the first set took the stuffing out of 16th seed Mancini. Mancini, who played as well as Chesnokov in the first set, struck the ball with immense power and stinging top spin but the Soviet number one worked hard chasing every ball.

The Argentine held serve when 5-4 down and then served for the set when 6-5 up after a service break. But Chesnokov broke back to take the set into the tie-break where, he said, he was more aggressive than Mancini. Chesnokov, showing far more stamina, then rattled off the second set in 27 minutes to win his first encounter with Mancini, his predecessor as Monte Carlo Open champion.

Italy's richest businessmen battle for success in soccer

ROME (R) — In the high-spending, star-spangled history of Italian soccer never has a player been sold for so much, and yet so firmly against his will, as 23-year-old international midfielder Roberto Baggio.

Baggio became the most expensive soccer player in the world when he signed a three-year contract Friday to join UEFA Cup champions Juventus for \$13 million.

But Baggio said he had been forced to leave his old club Fiorentina and that during next month's World Cup "I'll be playing as if I'm still wearing my purple Fiorentina shirt."

His new salary of about two billion lire (\$1.6 million) a year — four times what he was earning at Fiorentina — will put Baggio in the ranks of Dutch stars Ruud Gullit and European footballer of the year Marco Van Basten. Gullit and Van Basten play for A.C. Milan, the northern rivals

Juventus have been forced to watch power their way to an Italian League title, European Cup title and European Cup final over the last three years.

Napoli needed a huge loan in 1984 to buy Argentina's Diego Maradona — still the league's highest paid player on about \$2.5 million a year — for \$7.5 million.

But Juventus and Milan are currently top of the league when it comes to big spenders.

The clubs are owned by two of Italy's most powerful businessmen — Fiat car boss Gianni Agnelli and media mogul Silvio Berlusconi — who also rival each other for the title of the country's richest man.

Both see soccer as a means of extending their power and wealth and they battle for success on the football field as ruthlessly as they negotiate in the boardroom.

In Italian soccer, success breeds success, attracting bigger sponsors and huge gates.

Clubs like Juventus, Napoli, A.C. Milan and Internazionale regularly draw crowds of 60,000 on Sundays.

"It's hardly surprising that bigger and bigger investments are being made in soccer. I'm sure the clubs know what they are doing," Italian Soccer Federation chief Antonio Matarrese commented after the Baggio deal.

Agnelli's Juventus is estimated to have spent about 74 billion lire (\$59 million) on buying new players since 1987, including unhappy Welshman Ian Rush who quickly returned to Liverpool, Rui Barros of Portugal and Soviet pair Alexander Zavarov and Sergei Aleinikov.

But the investment failed to pay off until the end of this season when the club scooped the UEFA and Italian cups after five barren years.

Berlusconi, who rescued Milan from bankruptcy in 1986, spent a similar amount buying Gullit, Van Basten and fellow Dutchman Frank Rijkaard and creating the longest bench in Italy, with 22 top-class players.

He had been rewarded not only with the league and European titles but also with the Club title and the Super Cup. Milan, runners up in the league this season, defend their European Cup against Benfica in the final Wednesday.

Italian sports papers said Agnelli, determined to wrest back his supremacy, set aside a further 60 billion lire (\$48 million) to bring the best talent available to Juventus for next season.

Whether the investment in Baggio will pay off remains to be seen.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH GOREN BRIDGE

A TAMILIAN BRIDGE

ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 106 ♣ KQJ92 ♦ Q92 ♣ 92
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What do you respond?
A.—When you have a ruffing value and a four-card major, it is usually better to look for a 4-4 fit in that suit than to play in no trump—after all, opener also might have a doubleton. So bid two clubs to investigate.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 106 ♣ KQJ92 ♦ Q92 ♣ 92
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
A.—Whether partner has or has not yet denied a heart suit (with both majors some pairs agree to show spades first, other hearts), all you can do for the moment is return to two no trump. That shows a balanced hand of 8-9 points.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 106 ♣ KQJ92 ♦ Q92 ♣ 92
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 NT Pass 2 ♠ Pass
2 ♠ Pass ?
What action do you take?
A.—You have too much to pass, but not enough to jump to game in hearts. Raise to three hearts. That invites partner to go to four hearts if he has a maximum one no trump opening bid.

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ KQJ92 ♣ K4 ♦ Q42 ♣ 92
For information about Charles Goren's newsletter for bridge players, write Goren Bridge Letter, P.O. Box 4426, Orlando, Fla. 32802-4426.

Richard takes lead in Pat Bradley golf

HIGH POINT, North Carolina (R) — Deb Richard birdied four of her last six holes Friday to take a three-point lead over Barb Mucha after two rounds of the \$400,000 Pat Bradley international golf tournament at the Willow Creek golf club.

Richard, who began the round one point off the pace in this tournament played under a modified Stableford scoring system, had five birdies overall to offset two bogeys and a double bogey and finish with five points for a 15-point total.

Under the scoring system, five points are awarded for an eagle, a birdie is worth two points and no points are given for par. One point is subtracted for a bogey and a player loses three points for a double bogey.

"I was struggling to get things going," Richard said about her early problems which included a double bogey at the 7th. "The wind was swirling and I was indecisive about what club was in my hand. I made some bad swings because I was worried about my club choice."

"I feel fortunate to get out of my round the way I did," she added.

Mucha made three birdies and

"about three inches toward me," he said.

Crenshaw assessed himself a one-penalty and hit a 7-iron into a greenside bunker. From there, he holed the bunker shot of 50 feet and gave himself a par 4.

Since there was some question, tournament director Mike Shea approached Crenshaw on the 14th tee and explained that since he had not replaced the ball after it moved, he had to assess a second penalty stroke for a bogey 5 on the hole.

Despite his travails, Crenshaw said his round, "was one of the best I've ever played. I'm going to dwell on the really good shots I played because I think this is the best ball-hitting round I've ever played at Colonial."

Crenshaw had six birdies, the last two coming at 16, on a putt of 15 feet, and 18, where he sank an

18-footer. Cochran registered two birdies and one bogey for the day.

"Today, I hit some good shots but I didn't hit them in as tight as I did yesterday," the left-hander said.

Two shots off the pace at 136 was John Huston. Corey Pavin, Tom Purtzer, Curtis Strange and Curt Byrum were tied at three-under-par 137, while defending champion Ian Baker-Finch of Australia was at four-over-par 144 after a 71.

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Contras suspend disarmament pact

MANAGUA (R) — Nicaragua's contra rebels have said they had decided to hold onto their guns, suspending a disarmament accord, because they feared President Violeta Chamorro was losing control of the country.

"We announce that we are indefinitely suspending the disarmament and demobilisation of Nicaraguan resistance troops," said a rebel statement released in Managua and signed by contra military Commander Israel Galeano, known as Comandante Franklin.

The rebel statement said Chamorro's new government had not complied with demobilisation accords, which called for the government to guarantee the safety of disarmed rebel fighters and provide them with economic aid.

The contras said they would not resume disarming until Chamorro overcomes "the current climate of social uncertainty and instability," which the statement said was brought on by the leftist Sandinista opposition.

"A progressive deterioration of the new government's authority is being produced," the contra statement said.

The rebel decision was apparently sparked by a strike this week by pro-Sandinista labour unions, which demonstrated the opposition's ability to keep Chamorro in check by bringing the central government to a halt, closing the country's international airport and disrupting telephone communications.

The Sandinistas "have tried to sabotage and block the first measures of reconciliation, democratisation and demilitarisation, which are urgent and necessary," the rebel statement said.

The contras were armed, trained and financed by the U.S. government and fought to oust the Sandinistas from power in an eight-year war in which 30,000 died.

The rebels agreed to disarm their force after the Sandinistas, led by President Daniel Ortega, lost elections and handed over power on April 25 to Chamorro's pro-U.S. National Opposition Union alliance.

There was no immediate reaction from the Chamorro government to the contra statement. A Chamorro spokesman said a special government envoy to the rebels, Roberto Ferrey, was

meeting with contra leaders at their rural base camp Friday.

An estimated 17,000 rebels are grouped in five security zones inside Nicaragua, which are being supervised by a contingent of United Nations peacekeeping troops. A U.N. spokesman had no immediate comment on the contra statement.

In line with the accords with the Chamorro government, the first group of rebels handed over their weapons on May 8. The rebel force was to be fully disarmed by June 10. By Thursday 1,066 rebels had handed over their weapons, according to the United Nations.

The contras stressed their disarmament was voluntary and hinged on Chamorro's ability to provide economic aid for the rebels and control the armed forces, which were formed by the Sandinistas.

New York mayor asks for calm after violence over acquittal

NEW YORK (R) — Mayor David Dinkins appealed for calm after demonstrators, enraged by the murder acquittal of a white youth accused of leading a mob that shot dead a black teenager, threatened to take the law into their own hands.

Extra police were mobilised when 200 black demonstrators marched around the courthouse, broke bottles, burned a flag, overturned police barricades and shouted, "We're going to Bensonhurst to burn it down. Burn, baby, burn."

Some threw a police barricade at a photographer. Others knocked over a food stand run by Asians, spit at and jostled whites and knocked down an Hasidic Jew.

The white youth, Keith Monahan, 23, was acquitted of murder and manslaughter but convicted of lesser charges Friday in the shooting of Yusuf Hawkins, 16, last Aug. 23.

"We have had enough pain. We have had enough hate. Let

Yusuf Hawkins' death be the last in a terrible cycle of discrimination," Dinkins appealed, his third plea for calm in a week.

"We ask those of you who grieve over the loss of Yusuf not to be swayed by those who would spread their venom to cause the city more pain."

Mondello was accused of leading about 30 whites who attacked Hawkins and three friends, who had gone to predominantly Italian Bensonhurst to look at a used car.

The mob thought the blacks were going to a birthday party given by an 18-year-old former girlfriend of Mondello's.

On Thursday, the accused triggerman in the attack, Joseph Fama, was found guilty of murder.

On Friday night, dozens of blacks led by black activist Al Sharpton marched to Hawkins' home in the mostly black East New York section of Brooklyn, shouting "Yusuf, Yusuf" and vowing to take the law in their

own hands.

They punched reporters and broke the windcreens of vans used by television crews.

Although Mondello was acquitted of murder and manslaughter, he was convicted of taking part in a riot and illegally detaining his victim. Mondello faces up to 16 years in jail at his sentencing June 11.

As the not guilty verdicts were read, Hawkins' parents cried, "oh no," and his mother, Diane, wept uncontrollably, beating her fists against her knees.

Sharpton, who had vowed that the city would burn if there was an acquittal, stood up, pointed at Mini Snowden, the black forewoman of the jury, and said: "You are finished, you said."

Others shouted curses and made threats. But Snowden stared back at Sharpton until he sat down.

Michael Mondello, the defendant's father, declared: "It's God's will, it's God's will. Jesus has risen. Jesus has risen. Now my mother can rest in peace."

New alliance supports Walesa presidency

WARSAW (AP) — A close adviser to Lech Walesa has formed a new political alliance and declared support for the Solidarity leader as president of Poland.

The Centre Alliance favours speeding up of economic and political reform and an end to the presidency of former Communist Party chief Wojciech Jaruzelski, according to a founding declaration issued this week.

"The acceleration we are proposing is to do away with the remnants of the old system," Senator Jaroslaw Kaczynski, editor of the weekly Tygodnik Solidarnosc and a member of Walesa's inner circle, said Friday.

The new coalition is a manifestation of the dispute brewing between Walesa and the Solidarity-dominated government of Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki over the pace of reforms.

The government has launched an ambitious top-to-bottom overhaul of the Socialist economic system. But Walesa has pressed for an even faster cleansing of the old Communist regime's personnel and policies from state enterprises and bureaucracies.

At the heart of the debate is the April 1989 accord signed following the historic negotiations between the then-Communist authorities and Solidarity. It provided for unprecedented political, economic and trade union freedoms as well as partially democratic parliament elections that led to the unanticipated takeover of the government by Solidarity.

But parliament seats were guaranteed to the subsequently dissolved Communist Party, the interior and defence ministers were retained from the former regime and Jaruzelski was installed as president to smooth the transition and relations with the Soviet Union.

After the chain-reaction democratisation of the East Bloc during the last year, including fully free parliament elections in Hungary and East Germany, the accord already seems antiquated.

"The round-table agreement cannot be binding any longer," Kaczynski said. "Jaruzelski should come to the conclusion that his mission is concluded."

Jaruzelski's presidential term lasts until 1995, and fully free parliament voting is not scheduled until 1993.

E. Germans express fear as unification nears

POTSDAM, East Germany (AP) — A growing number of East Germans fear that German unification and the coming economic shakeout will lead to factory closings and high unemployment.

East German worker Alfons Domke already is worried that unification may cost his wife her job. Hotel executive Gabriele Gaertner fears that 40 per cent of the workers in many sectors will be laid off.

"Things are just going too quickly," says Ms. Gaertner, the public relations manager for one of East Germany's most successful hotels.

"Before, people said they needed to travel or have a car, but that's not so important now. Now, existence is what's important," she said.

On Friday in Bonn, the two German nations signed a historic treaty that will make them a single economic entity in less than seven weeks and plunge East Germany into the rigors of capitalism.

The current talk is a long way from the euphoric scenes of Germans celebrating the opening of the Berlin Wall late last year and freely electing a conservative government on March 18 on prom-



Jill Ireland with her autobiography *Life Wish*

Entertainment world mourns passing stars

LOS ANGELES (R) — It was one of the entertainment world's saddest weeks.

It lost a singing legend, an actress who publicly cheated cancer for six years and a puppet master who gave the world Kermit the frog and Miss Piggy.

Ironically, it all happened while many of the stars were away in France at the Cannes Film Festival — the entertainment world's annual rites of spring.

Singer Sammy Davis Jr., the entertainment world's "Mr. Wonderful," died Wednesday aged 64 after an eight-month battle with throat cancer.

British actress Jill Ireland died two days later aged 53 after publicly challenging cancer with her actor husband, Charles Bronson.

The death of Jim Henson, who has also 53 and who entertained millions of pre-school children and their parents with Kermit, Miss Piggy, and a host of other puppets he created, was unexpected. He died of pneumonia.

Davis was buried quietly late Friday with only his third wife, Ahabovic, and a few close friends, including Liza Minnelli, present.

Earlier 1,300 stars and fans gave standing ovations to a stream of speakers at a memorial service. The Las Vegas gambling

"strip" turned its lights off for 10 minutes in a unique tribute.

Davis has offered this advice: "You have to know when to go on stage and you have to know when to leave."

"I received a lot of strength from the calm courage of Jill Ireland and her husband, Charles Bronson."

Ireland, who starred in 19 films with Bronson, died on Friday. She wrote two best sellers, including *Life Wish*, which told of her battle with cancer, and she gave public lectures on her battle in the hope it would help women facing the same ordeal.

She cheated the death warnings of doctors as she attended the wedding of her son Paul McCallum — she was originally married to British actor David McCallum — two weeks before she died. Bronson held her arm.

"When you love someone you feel their pain," Bronson said. Ireland said of Bronson: "I took one look at Charlie and knew my life was never going to be the same again."

Henson, who died in a New York hospital Wednesday, once described Kermit as a normal person in a bunch of crazies. "Puppetry is a good way of hiding," he said.

Drug smugglers' tunnel found under U.S.-Mexico border

DOUGLAS, Arizona (R) — United States customs officials have said they had uncovered a highly sophisticated tunnel, described as something out of a spy movie, used by drug smugglers to carry thousands of pounds of cocaine across the U.S.-Mexico border.

The tunnel, more than 60 metres long, resembled "something out of a James Bond movie — it's just unbelievable," said Thomas McDermott, U.S. customs official agent in Douglas.

Customs officials said they discovered the well-equipped, tunnel connecting a luxury house in Agua Prieta, Mexico, with a warehouse just across the border in Douglas Thursday night.

The tunnel's U.S. opening is hidden under a pool table and covered with a hydraulically-lifted concrete slab in the warehouse floor, agents said.

The five-foot-high (1.5 metres), reinforced concrete tunnel was equipped with electrical outlets and lights and had side rooms large enough to hold several tonnes of cocaine, they said.

Judy Turner, customs spokeswoman in Houston, said authorities believed the tunnel had been built by drug cartels. The tunnel appeared to be major route for cocaine smuggling into Arizona and California, she said.

"We would speculate a drug cartel would go to this length to build a tunnel. This tunnel is incredibly sophisticated and professionally engineered," she said.

The author of the article, Craig Covault, acknowledged in an interview with Reuters that the cosmonauts were not in any immediate danger and that another Soyuz craft could be sent up empty to take the crew home if needed.

"I would not use the term 'stranded,'" Covault said in a telephone interview.

He added that the two cosmonauts, Anatoli Soloyev and Alexander Baladim, were scheduled to stay aboard the Mir space station until some time in the summer so there was no need to bring them home immediately.

However, he said, in the event of a life-threatening emergency aboard the Mir, the two cosmonauts may have to take their chances fleeing in the Soyuz.

Soyuz craft damaged; cosmonauts without 'lifeboat'

NEW YORK (R) — Two cosmonauts aboard the Soviet Union's orbiting Mir space station have been without a reliable means of returning to Earth since February and are preparing to make emergency outside repairs on their ferry craft, an industry journal reported Friday.

U.S. space experts said, however, that the Soviet Union had known about the problem since it occurred in February and the cosmonauts were not in any danger.

Aviation Week and Space Technology magazine, quoting a visiting Soviet cosmonaut, said the Soyuz craft, which carried the cosmonauts to the space station was damaged during launch on Feb. 11, leaving the two men "without a reliable escape vehicle in the event of an emergency."

Spokesmen for the U.S. space agency declined all comment on the matter.

But the American space experts who are knowledgeable about the Soviet space programme said Soviet space officials had not expressed any grave concern about the men or their mission.

"The Soviets have known since late February that they had a problem and they have talked about it in the Soviet press," Marcia Smith, a specialist in Soviet space policy at the Library of Congress in Washington, told Reuters.

"The cosmonauts aren't concerned about it...it's a bit of a pain in the neck right now, but it's not life threatening or mission threatening."

James Oberg, an American author of two books and numerous articles on the Soviet space programme, agreed with that assessment.

"If they were really concerned, they would have gone out sooner," Oberg told Reuters.

He was referring to the planned spacewalk to make repairs to protective insulation blankets that were partly torn from the Soyuz craft when it was launched.

Oberg said he believed the Soyuz craft could successfully return to Earth without repairs.

"I'd fly it as is," he said, "I'd let my son fly it."

John Pike, director of the Space Policy Project at the Federation of American Scientists, also said there was no emergency involving the Soyuz.

"In principle they can stay up there till their bones melt," he said of the two cosmonauts. "This is no 'trapped in space' with only two-days left to live' scenario."

The author of the article, Craig Covault, acknowledged in an interview with Reuters that the cosmonauts were not in any immediate danger and that another Soyuz craft could be sent up empty to take the crew home if needed.

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COLUMN 8

130-year-old island fort for sale

PORTSMOUTH, England (AP) — A 130-year-old island fort off the South English coast which was built to deter the threat of French invasion and has been transformed into a luxury home is for sale. The real estate company Knight Frank and Rutley, handling the deal has said that the seller, property developer Roger Penfold, is asking £5.75 million (\$9.7 million). The property, called No Man's Land Fort, is 4.8 kilometres off Portsmouth, in the Solent seaway between the coast and the Isle of Wight, 112 kilometres southwest of London.

The fort, measuring three-quarters of an acre (0.3 hectares), was built to house 400 soldiers and 49 guns each weighing 70 tons, construction began in 1860. It was designed to defend against the invasion by the French under Emperor Napoleon III, the nephew of Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte who died in 1821. The invasion never occurred and the circular, armour-plated stone fort fell into disuse and dereliction. Penfold, 44, bought it from the Ministry of Defence for an estimated £300,000 (\$507,000) in 1986 and spent 2½ years converting it into a luxury home.

Red Riding Hood banned from first grade reading list

CULVER CITY, California (AP) — First-grade readers of little Red Riding Hood have more than the big bad wolf, say school officials. It's the wine she has in her basket. An award-winning adaptation of the classic Grimm's fairy tale has been pulled from the youngster's recommended supplemental reading list because the heroine has wine in the basket of goodies she brings her ailing grandmother. "It gives the younger ones the wrong impression about alcohol. If they should refrain, why give them a story saying it's OK?" said Vera Jasini, assistant superintendent for instruction. "I don't think the basket of wine is a good concept for kindergarten or first grade," said school board member Robert Knopf. He said he would rather have seen "a nice thing like cookies and cakes or a picnic basket with food in it." Ms. Jasini, who ordered the ban, said it was the final paragraph of the story that sealed her decision — the part after the woodsman kills the big bad wolf. "The grandmother drank some of the wine, and... after a while, the grandmother felt quite strong and healthy, and began to clean up the mess that the wolf had left in the cottage." The version of the story, written by Trina Schart Hyman, won a Caldecott Honour Award for Children's Literature.

Roll over Beethoven, the price is right

LONDON (R) — A Beethoven manuscript was sold at a London auction for £258,000 (\$892,000), a record price for the composer's work. Sotheby's auction house said the 16-page first movement of the Sonata for Violoncello and Piano in A Major (Opus 69) was the longest and most important example of Beethoven's work to be sold for years. An unidentified London dealer bought the manuscript, property of the late Vienna-born musician Felix Salzer. The previous Beethoven price record was £93,500 (\$158,000), paid two years ago for a manuscript of revisions to his Ninth Symphony.

Bush is worth \$2.3m

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush's personal worth is valued at \$2,352,500, most of it in a blind trust, and he has liabilities of just \$49,000, the White House says. In addition to the blind trust, Bush's principal asset is his seaside home in Kennebunkport, Maine, which he valued at \$892,000, according to disclosure forms released Tuesday. However, other estimates have put the value of the ocean-side compound at more than \$3 million. Vice President Dan Quayle and his wife Marilyn reported assets ranging from at least \$691,004 to \$1,045,000 or more. The Quayles' tax return, released last month, showed interest and dividend income of \$16,430, primarily from stock holdings in Central Newspapers Inc., a publishing company owned by Quayle's family. The Quayles' only liability was the mortgage on their home in suburban McLean, Virginia, which they rent out while living in the vice presidential residence. The mortgage was listed as between \$100,001 to \$250,000. They paid off a promissory note of less than \$50,000 to Huntington Newspapers on Feb. 28, 1990. Regulations permit federal officials to list assets and liabilities in ranges rather than precise dollars.

Cheney: U.S. proposing new ideas on conventional arms

WASHINGTON (AP) — The administration of President George Bush is proposing new ideas to solve several knotty issues holding up East-West agreement on reducing conventional forces in Europe, Defence Secretary Dick Cheney has said.

But he said he didn't expect a sudden breakthrough in the complex negotiations.

Cheney, in an interview with AP Broadcast Services, confirmed the proposals were taken to Moscow by Secretary of State James Baker.

He gave no details about the proposals except to say they were developed by himself, Gen. Colin Powell, who is chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft.

"The conventional talks right now are complicated," he said.

"If you will, we have a sense the Soviets have slowed things down."

Cheney was responding to a question about a report in the New York Times that the United States had proposed to "split the difference" on such problems areas as limits on the number of tactical aircraft, one of the major sticking points in the Vienna talks.

The report said Baker was prepared to discuss a limit in the range of 6,000 aircraft, a number higher than NATO had been willing to accept.

The negotiations involve North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries as well as Warsaw Pact nations. 23 countries in all. Bush has expressed hope that a treaty would be concluded this year, but the pace of negotiations has lagged.

Poll predicts big win for Romania's NSF

BUCHAREST (R) — Romania's ruling National Salvation Front (NSF) is heading for a resounding victory Sunday in the country's first free elections for more than half a century, according to an official opinion poll published Saturday.

The elections, five months after the bloody overthrow of Communist ruler Nicolae Ceausescu, follow a campaign marked by violence and intimidation that has raised Western concern about Romania's path from dictatorship to democracy.

The latest poll by the Dacia Institute, published by the official Rompress news agency, forecast interim head of state and NSF leader Ion Iliescu would win 70 per cent of votes in a three-way race for the presidency.

It gave a similar margin to the front, which is led by ex-Communists and spearheaded last December's revolution, in elections being fought the same day by 82 parties for seats in a two-chamber parliament.

The human rights group Helsinki Watch, in Romania to monitor the elections with other international observers, said Saturday that the NSF government had failed to create the conditions for a fair election.

"(The) environment is not conducive to free expression for the population," it said in a report.

"This is especially true for smaller towns and villages where little has changed since the revolution," it added, listing allegations of attacks on opposition

party headquarters and their members.

The United States Friday also said it was still concerned about intimidation of opposition parties and would hold the government responsible for ensuring free and fair elections.

"The United States is committed to working for the consolidation of democratic governments and processes throughout Eastern Europe," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

"We believe that free and fair elections in Romania would represent an important first step in that process."

Opposition parties accuse the front of impeding their campaigns through harassment and attacks by NSF supporters and by restricting their access to the media.

Attacks by NSF opponents have also been reported at rallies held by the front, which formed an interim government the day after Ceausescu's Christmas day execution to steer Romania to its first free multi-party elections for 53 years.

Police Saturday reported more than 150 incidents during campaigning and said soldiers and 20,000 policemen would guard polling stations to ensure orderly voting.

Polling stations open at 6 a.m. (0300 GMT) and close at 11 p.m. (2000 GMT) with initial computer projections of the results expected minutes later.

Bush aide seeks to prevent war over Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (R) — A high level United States government mission began efforts Saturday to draw Pakistan and India back from the brink of war over a Muslim uprising in Indian-ruled Kashmir.

President George Bush's Deputy National Security Adviser Robert Gates was flying to the North Yemen capital Sanaa to intercept Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who is on a Middle East tour.

U.S. officials said he was due in the Pakistani capital Islamabad for more talks Sunday before meeting Indian Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh in New Delhi Monday.

Pakistan has welcomed the U.S. attempt to reduce tension between the two traditional enemies, but Indian Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral made clear this week New Delhi would not accept third party mediation.

"Our line is very clear. We want a reduction in tension. We want a reduction in rhetoric and we would like the Indians to do something politically to solve the Kashmir problem," a senior Pakistani diplomat said.

In New Delhi, an official said India wanted Gates to persuade Pakistan to stop young militants infiltrating from Pakistan's Azad (free) Kashmir across the ceasefire line that divides the region.

North Yemen is Bhutto's fifth stop on an eight-nation tour of Middle Eastern and African countries designed to bolster support for Pakistan's stand over Kashmir.

She strongly supports political by a militant campaign by "freedom-fighters" against Indian rule in the two-thirds of Kashmir it controls.

Pakistan demands Indian Kashmiris be allowed to choose their own future, but India is equally adamant in declaring that its Jammu and Kashmir state is irrevocably part of India.

It blames Pakistan for fomenting the armed uprising in which more than 300 people have died this year.

Gates's main mission, according to Western diplomats and Pakistani analysts in Islamabad, is to prevent a war of words between the two countries sliding into their fourth armed conflict since they became independent in 1947.